



# ANTILLEN REVIEW

*Onwanson  
29/12/81*

Vol. 2, No. 1

DEC. 1981/JAN. 1982

NAfl. 6.00

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FROM THE EDITOR

Man has a unique gift for mystifying the most basic and clear concepts of life. He does so, no doubt, to cover up that ever recurring inability to fathom who he is and consequently where he is going.

When prime-minister Don Martina just over a year ago uttered those classic words "independence is first and foremost a state of mind", the nation applauded. But since then we have witnessed a process of mystification caused by political negotiations uncannily separated from the feelings and aspirations of the people.

Independence has certainly not become 'a cause' inspiring the masses. Nor has the idea called forth or stimulated any of the fundamental emotional ingredients for nation-building. On the contrary, to many if not all the word equals inescapable fate. Even on Aruba it has a distinct negative ring, its meaning reduced to 'separation from others'.

The question should be raised whether the prerequisites for nationhood, as understood elsewhere, are indeed valid in this case. Maybe it is time to realize that the identity of the peoples which inhabit these islands cannot be derived from common historical

roots, from being of one race or attachment to the land. Blut und Boden theories, even in their mildest form, do not apply. And those who try to do so only set into motion a disastrous process of disintegration oblivious to the very uniqueness of this people: an incredible variety of the human race living on barren hypheens between continents and cultures.

A uniqueness which precludes the independence concepts which flourished during the period of decolonisation. The Antilles are not late, they are different.

This truth is often better perceived abroad than at home or in The Hague. A falling apart of the Antilles is nowhere believed to be advantageous to anyone. Ties with Holland do no longer have the nasty ring of colonialism. Independence is a state of mind and its translation into constitutional terms should take into account what makes the Antilles so very different. Once this is perceived the process of mystification can be stopped and constructive thinking about the future can begin. To both AR intends to contribute the best it can.

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\* AR's Publisher, Editor and Staff wish you
\* a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year
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## Venezuela and the U.S.A. take active interest in the Netherlands Antilles



Mr. Montes de Oca

Meeting U.S. officials in Washington during October last and Mr. Montes de Oca, leading personality in the Venezuelan Cabinet, earlier this month, A.R. learned of a remarkable conformity between the Caribbean oriented policies of both regional powers.

Both aim at promoting democratic self-determination as a lasting basis for pluralism and stability. Both profess genuine recognition of the authenticity of the Caribbean peoples. Both are developing policies to stimulate economic and cultural development, trying at the same time to avoid even the semblance of neo-colonialism. This heightened interest, which obviously springs from a self-serving motive, does nonetheless offer Caribbean countries, including the Netherlands Antilles, promising chances for development.

### Reagan initiative

Growing global criticism of the Reagan administration's alleged incoherent foreign policy may be painfully mistaken with regard to the Caribbean. Having listed the region as a high priority and emphasizing the constructive role the United States should play in its economic development, Washington has developed what seems to be a new and dynamic approach to the region's chronic problems. An impressive number of consultative meetings with Caribbean leaders, both political and otherwise, has resulted in what is now commonly called 'the Reagan initiative'.

Combining incentives for trade and private investment with bilateral and multilateral assistance programmes, the initiative also aims at stimulating private-sector development. In fact the cornerstone of the new U.S. policy, which views the Caribbean as a pilot project for its approach to Third World problems, is the har-

nessing of the resources of the private sector. For that purpose private sector leaders of the USA and the Caribbean have been and still are being invited to take an active share in shaping the success of the new policy. Early December business executives, high level officials, a number of heads of government and key US-Government and international agency decision makers both from the USA and the region will meet in Miami to discuss the broad challenges facing the area. Issues in investment attraction, the role of government and social institutions in a private-sector-based development strategy and specific priorities and opportunities in several key industrial sectors will be reviewed. It is expected that the new US policy will be put into action soon afterwards. The implications of this new approach for the Netherlands Antilles may be considerable. If reacted to properly the offshore-debate (see below) f.e. may well take a turn for the better.

### Venezuelan concurrence.

During a recent visit to Curaçao Mr. Montes de Oca, Venezuela's Minister of the Interior and a pre-candidate of the leading party Copei for the 1983 presidential elections, expressed his appreciation for the Reagan initiative calling it both clear and flexible. A judgement surprisingly in contrast with many comments on Mr. Reagan's performance at Cancun, Mexico. The lively and well spoken Montes de Oca moreover described his own country's policy toward the region in very similar terms. Its principal aim, de Oca said, is to promote indigenous economic development in order to safeguard the democratic process and stability in general. Social injustice, he explained, is rampant and offers the non-democratic forces wide open chances for stirring up unrest. "Denying the fact

of the existing unequal distribution of wealth, amounts to suicide", he said. Like the Reagan administration de Oca (and his government) feels that in order to strengthen democracy's roots the surrounding countries must be helped to develop a sound economic basis.

Two principles guide his government in its effort to assist neighbouring nations. In accordance with his party's manifesto great emphasis is put on general participation in the national income. Mr. de Oca implied that social justice and democratic pluralism are the basic ingredients for development. Recognition of the authenticity of the Caribbean peoples is, according to Mr. de Oca, another important motif in his country's foreign policy.

### Special interest

Both for geographical and cultural reasons Venezuela has a special interest in the Netherlands Antilles, declared the minister. The proximity of the A-B-C-Islands to the mainland has given them a greater affinity to the Latin-American way of life than most other Caribbean countries. This should explain Venezuela's willingness to grant the Antilles special oil favours and its eagerness to expand the existing cultural exchange programme.

The special terms on which Venezuela is prepared to sell oil to the Netherlands Antilles - Mr. de Oca announced the offer officially during his recent visit - are identical to those offered by Mexico and Venezuela together to a number of South American and Caribbean countries. Recipient nations pay only 70% of the standard(OPEC) ▶



price, the remaining being financed by a soft loan (at 2%) over 20 years. This would allow such countries considerable leeway to be used for development purposes. The difference with the Venezuelan-Mexican offer is, according to mr. de Oca, that the agreement with the Antilles is of a bilateral nature. Although he did not explicitly say so, this might imply that Venezuela could grant the Antilles further special financial favours, if it encountered severe economic difficulties in the future. As many observers have pointed out, the Mexican-Venezuelan offer does in fact increase the receiving countries' foreign debts.

Within the context of the cultural agreement between the two countries, which will be five years old on January 8, 1982, activities will be stepped up in the near future. Having established good working relationships with Aruba and Curaçao, Bonaire and the Windward Islands will soon be included in the programme. Mr. de Oca carefully emphasized his country's respect for national identity. There may be little doubt, however, that recent activities by the communist bloc (see AR vol. 1, no

6) are prompting Venezuela to accelerate the programme. Grenada's subtle attempts at infiltration do worry Caracas, mr. de Oca admitted. As the Grenadian Government has moved away from its initially declared pluralism to downright dogmatism, it must be viewed as a threat to democracy, de Oca declared.

#### Offshore

The last mentioned developments in the Eastern Caribbean as well as the increasing problems presently being encountered in Central America, have also heightened the interest of the USA in countries like the Netherlands Antilles. Officials at the State Department are keenly aware of the necessity to help such countries stave off unrest. In accordance with the Reagan initiative this means first of all strengthening their economic bases. In that respect, it is felt that any change in the existing tax-treaty between the USA and the Antilles, which would diminish the latter's income from international business, is most undesirable. AR learned of great disagreement on this point between the State Department and the Treasury in Washington.

Obviously this does enhance the Antilles' chances for a favourable outcome of the ongoing negotiations on this matter although, as one official in the US capital observed, people at the Treasury are hard to convince. On the other hand AR also learned from mr. Montes de Oca that Venezuela supports the Antilles and has made its viewpoint known in Washington. Both avenues of pressure should in the near future be further exploited by the Antillean Government.

#### Aruba

The latest developments in the independence process are causing distinct concern both in Washington and Caracas. Their increased interest in the welfare of the country and the awareness of its strategic position in the region, have apparently led both powers to even more favour independence for the Antilles as one nation. Mr. Betico Croes' policy of separatism aiming at independence for Aruba is certainly not greeted with much enthusiasm. His flirtations with leftist movements in the region, obviously only meant to strengthen his position in the ongoing negotiations with Holland, are nevertheless causing anxiety in Washington. The economic feasibility of an independent Aruba is also seriously doubted both by officials and on the Hill.

Mr. Montes de Oca left no doubt about the fact that Caracas prefers one Antillean state. It would make for a stronger nation, he declared, if the six islands stayed together. In addition, de Oca said, its identity would be easier to recognize. No secret promises, according to the Venezuelan minister, have been made to mr. Croes. On the contrary his government is of the opinion that Aruba has the obligation to devote its energy to obtain independence for the whole nation as one entity. Pressed for the opinion of his government if such a solution would not be attainable, mr. de Oca said that whatever happens this should not be the result of pressure by the Netherlands. Most important of all, he added, any solution should be the



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reflection of the express will of the people. Venezuela would always honour and respect a decision of the vox populi. But, he warned, turbulence has never solved problems of this nature, nor has it created a favourable ambience for the creation of mini-states. This carefully phrased admonition was underlined by the observation that Venezuela would strongly disapprove of a solution based on compromises or brought about by pressure from outside forces.

**Export**

Although the policies of Venezuela and the USA seem very well in tune with one another, there is also a marked difference in approach. The USA apparently puts an almost exclusive accent on undergirding economies. Thomas O. Enders, assistant secretary of State for Inter-American Affairs, thinks that "the place to begin is the supply side to help Caribbean countries to create new, competitive production capacity and to

take better advantage of existing resources in people and capital". Realising fully well the threat posed by "small insurrectional groups, that have recently been uniting under the aegis of external enemies more concerned with power and ideology than either development or democracy", mr. Enders feels that control and defeat of such movements must be achieved by assisting Caribbean nations to help themselves economically. So far Venezuela agrees. But the latter country has added an extra and no doubt vital dimension to its Caribbean oriented policy. Putting it negatively, mr. de Oca expressed his amazement about the fact that the USA has exported almost every aspect (and item) of the American way of life except its most precious one. As he recently told Alexander Haig, the USA has failed to pass on to other peoples its great tradition of democratic values.

Venezuela on its part has embarked for several years on inten-

sive cultural exchange programmes aimed at sharing the achievements of its relatively young — 20 years — democracy. Mr. de Oca is of the opinion that the Free World should conduct a much more aggressive campaign selling its spiritual values. In connection to this, he remarked, that recent contacts between Grenada and the Netherlands Antilles should not only be viewed as a threat but also as an opportunity to help reverse the undemocratic process on the island known for its spices.

This observation indicates that the Netherlands Antilles could, by virtue of its own longstanding democratic tradition, play a stabilizing role in the region in coming years. A fact which is increasingly recognized also in Washington and which is one more explanation for the heightened interest in the Antilles of the regional superpowers. A fact, which also — as indicated above — offers the Antilles an opportunity to strengthen its own position. ■

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# The Hague Summit

## Options further narrowed down

More study, more talking, yet another report and for the time being no decisions. *Voilà*, the only result of the recent consultation between the Central Government of the Antilles, Aruba and the Netherlands. Called together to discuss Aruba's future course the summit, which was held in the Hague during the last week of October, agreed to appoint a committee of seven wise men to report within six months on the feasibility of Aruban independence and on the consequences such a possible development would have for the other islands.

Interpretations of the summit's outcome vary considerably. Some observers claim another victory for Aruba's champions of separate independence. Others believe that valuable time has been gained in which to convince the wayward island of its supposed folly. Whatever the case the consultation has at least made clear how narrow the margins are for each party concerned to maneuver within.

### Pressure

It is by now no secret that the Dutch are under great international pressure to maintain unity between the six islands. As one observer, present at the summit put it, "the Dutch have not as yet developed a clear concept of their own about the future of the Antilles. The problem is that neither the Antilles nor Holland have much say in this matter. International power structures will play a decisive role".

Consequently the Dutch delegation to the summit resorted to tactics of deterrent. Already during the very first meeting, presided by Joop den Uyl, leader of the Dutch Socialist Party and presently holding the portfolio of Antillean Affairs in Holland's latest coalition government, the Antillean delegation was told that separate independence for Aruba would, as far as Holland is concerned, also imply finalizing the relationship between itself and the other five islands. This did not exactly please the Central Government's delegation. Nor was it meant to. Obviously the Dutch were trying to force the Antilleans to solve their internal discord themselves. Great pressure was put on Curaçao to relinquish its absolute majority in parliament (Each island territory has a

fixed number of seats in the national parliament (STATEN) regardless of the outcome of elections.) thereby knocking the bottom out of Aruba's main argument for separatism. Whether a re-allocation of parliamentary representation would satisfy the Arubans and keep them within the fold is by now, however, very much an open question. Some believe that such a solution would offer Aruba the face saving it needs. Others are convinced that the point of no re-

Betico Croes



Photo by F. Sulvaran

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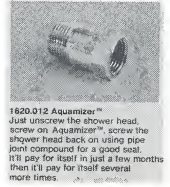
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turn has already been passed. Be that as it may the Dutch at the Hague summit clearly tried to impress upon the Antillean delegation to do whatever possible to keep the islands together.

### Disappointing

In accordance the Dutch were ready for tough bargaining with the Aruban delegation. But the long awaited memorandum, which at last should reveal the real intentions of the Arubans, was too vague to allow a clear cut answer. Aruba proposed a kind of common-wealth relationship between itself and the Netherlands during the final stage before independence, Holland guaranteeing external defence and foreign relations.

Although the Dutch made no secret of their unwillingness to cooperate in the proposed fashion, there was no opening to put Aruba on the block. It was felt by many that because of Aruba's weak performance the Antilles lost a chance to arrive at some clarity. On the other hand this development offered all parties some breathing space. A proposal, ▶



thought out even before the summit convened, was put forward. A committee of seven, three Dutchmen and four representatives of the respective island territories, would be appointed to study the implications of Aruban independence in the widest sense of the word.

### Phraseology

From that moment on the consultation begot the character of a negotiation. Defining the task of the proposed committee led to long sessions of arguing over words. Holland insisted that the committee should not only look into the feasibility of Aruban independence but 'should also determine into what final stage the other islands would find themselves as a result of Aruban independence'. The Central Government's delegation protested and after three hours of bickering the

text was changed into 'should also determine *the position* and final stage the other islands *might* find themselves in as a result of Aruban independence'. A phrasing purposed to take the sting out of Holland's threat to link a final decision about the future of the other five islands to possible Aruban independence.

Aruba managed to get included into the task description that 'the report will give due attention to a planned realization of the Aruban independence'. Obviously this was done for political p.r. reasons, although the Aruban opposition pointed out correctly that no self-respecting people will allow others to plan its independence process!

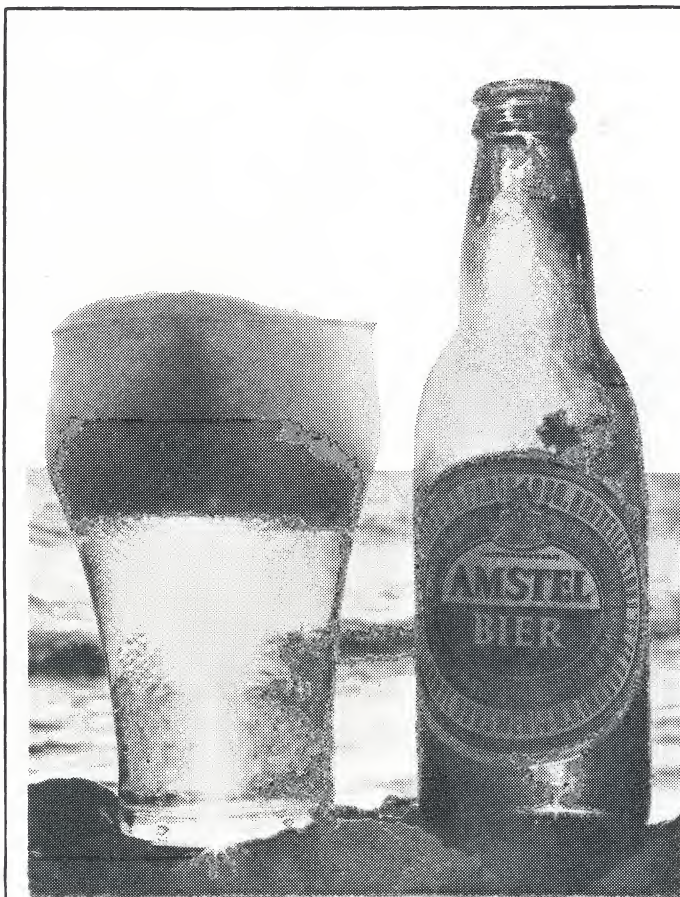
Holland secured a victory by having the condition included that the committee will explore the possibility of co-operation between Aruba and the other five islands 'of such an strong and enduring nature as to warrant a fruitful re-

lationship with the Netherlands'. The implication being that Holland will not give any guarantees in case Aruba decides to go it alone.

### Opportunity

Little imagination is needed to conclude that the committee is facing an almost impossible task. Reading between the lines its real mandate is to embark on a probably last and decisive mission trying to keep the islands together in whatever constitutional structure. It should be noted that this procedure offers Aruba the opportunity to make up its mind in full realisation of all possible consequences. It could not have wished for more.

But on the other hand it should be clear that the options are very limited indeed. That realization may hopefully lead to a much needed initiative within the Antilles to come together and find a solution to what is basically an Antillean problem. ■



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# Restructuring cultural cooperation not without pitfalls



*Sticusa's director Thijs*

## Flamingo island promising exception

The ongoing negotiations concerning independence may impress observers as stalling rather than promoting the process of self determination, in other aspects a steady progress is being made in shifting responsibility from Holland to the Antilles and in particular to the individual islands.

Recently visiting the Antilles mr. M. D. Thijs, director of the Foundation for Cultural Cooperation between the two kingdom partners (STICUSA), told AR of plans to restructure the decision making process with regard to cultural development work. A process in which Bonaire, according to mr. Thijs, leads the way.

STICUSA, funded by the Dutch Government and led by a board consisting of both Antilleans and Dutchmen, has up till now stimulated cultural development by maintaining direct links with a variety of organizations in the Antilles. These include not only the Cultural Centres — a widespread misconception — but also the cultural departments of both the national and island governments and a number of organizations operating on the national scale. This procedure, however, is no longer satisfactory. The general tendency to de-centralize government and decision making to the respective islands makes a re-structuring of the cultural cooperation between Holland and the Antilles imperative. Moreover the present set-up often runs the risk of funding projects, which are not carried by a broad enough basis in the Antilles. As an example, mr. Thijs quotes a re-

quest by the cultural department of Curaçao to help fund a children-book-week. A project, excellent in itself, about which apparently there had been no contact with the local Public Library and the Curaçao Cultural Centre. As Sticusa maintains close contact with both last named organizations, which also were planning such a week, it was placed in a most awkward position.

The solution would be to set up coordinating bodies on each of the islands consisting of representatives of government agencies and private initiative. This would ensure a coordinated approach and promote long term planning. It would also allow for the transfer of much decision making from Sticusa to the islands themselves. A development mr. Thijs would welcome.

### Bonaire

This procedure has in fact been followed on Bonaire already for years. The Cultural Centre Bonaire (CCB) does coordinate all cultural development projects. Its relation to the Island Government is of such a nature that the CCB can be considered the government's executive body de facto for cultural activities. Insiders, however, observe that this is possible on the Flamingo island because of its smallness in population and consequently limited number of organizations. No doubt Bonaire's small scale situation does offer certain advantages. Mr. Thijs admits doubting the feasibility of such an approach on Curaçao or Aruba because of the much larger number of organizations working in this

field. Huge representative bodies usually do not excel in productivity. Some inventive thinking in order to arrive at a functioning solution will obviously have to be undertaken.

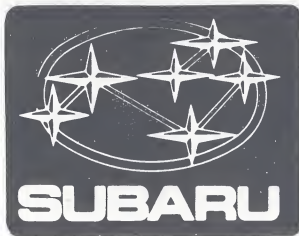
### Government

Serious problems loom ahead considering the role of government in the intended restructuring of cultural cooperation. In particular if, as some would like to see, the Dutch development funds for this purpose are put directly at the disposal of the island governments.

First of all this would imply bypassing the National Government and thereby anticipating developments with regard to the independence process. Mr. Thijs is of the opinion that STICUSA should certainly not be a forerunner in this respect. Secondly it is feared that such a transfer of funds might easily subject cultural activities to political manipulation. Private initiative could suffer financial strangulation because of ideological or party-political motives.

And maybe most worrisome of all, the cultural sector might find itself even more at the bottom of the government's list of priorities than it is at the moment. No doubt these pitfalls can be evaded. For that purpose it seems advisable to keep channeling funds via STICUSA during the transition period preceding independence. Transferring the funds to the island governments would make the foundation superfluous. A considerable amount of know-how and some measure of control would then be lost, no doubt to the detriment of the work itself. ■

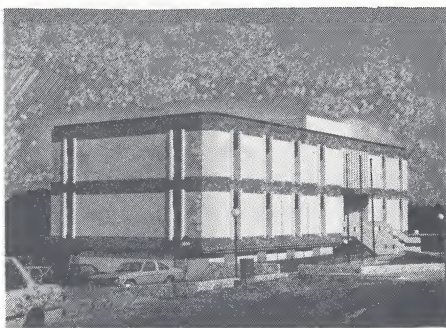




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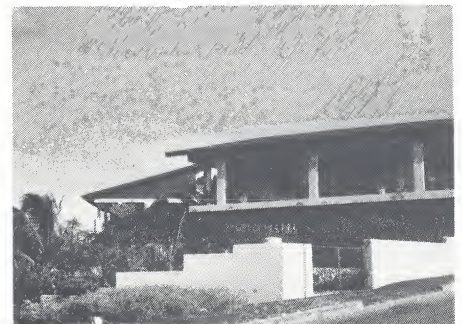


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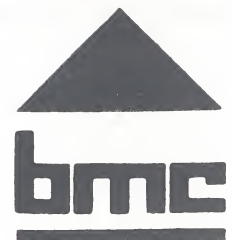


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# Free enterprise

## The key to worldwide development?

excerpts from a speech by Ron Gomes Casseres.



Photo by F. Silveira

Ron Gomes Casseres

The individual's freedom to pursue his interest is greatly decreased for the simple reason that the interests of the individuals may not be in accordance with the interest of society as this is perceived by the bureaucrats. It is interesting to note that, while socialism is seen as the ideal to achieve social justice, as the ideal for human brotherhood and world peace, and as a commitment to raise the poor masses to a higher level and to narrow the gap between the rich and the poor, socialism in developing countries too often tends to involve in conjunction with totalitarianism.

This control and authoritative rule, which characterize communism, are generally necessary in order for the state to dictate what is to be produced and how available resources of labor, land and capital are to be utilized in countries which the democratic traditions are not yet as mature as in, f.e. the mixed-economy democracies of Western Europe. In developing countries the tragedy is that socialism, partly due to traditions of authoritarian rule by foreign or local powerholders, will only result in economic growth, and then only on short term, after the gradual removal of political freedom, intellectual freedom, freedom of speech, and freedom of choice."

### Development

Quoting mr. K. K. S. Dadzie, director general for Development and International Cooperation for the U.N., mr. Gomes Casseres next pointed out that "development is not just a matter of 'things', to be attained by capital accumulation, infrastructure building, management training and so on. Development is the unfolding of people's individual and social imagination in defining goals and inventing ways to approach them. Development is the continuing process of the liberation of peoples and societies. There is development when they are able to assert their autonomy and, in self-reliance, ▶

There can be no genuine development without personal freedom. There can be no genuine development without economic growth. To develop is **not** only to have, but **neither** is it solely to be or to become: its is to be, to become **and** to have. No economic system better creates the framework for these conditions of development than a market economy system which at the same time is sensitive to the needs of people."

Thus reads the conclusion of a speech delivered by mr. R. Gomes Casseres at the Antillean Jaycees on the 16th of October last. Dismissing the socialist, centrally planned economy concept as not functional he suggested that "we should promote a form of capitalism and market economy that is much more sensitive to the needs and the problems of the poor and the disadvantaged sectors of our society than has been the case traditionally.

### Capitalism

Mr. Gomes Casseres started off by reminding his audience of the basic and adapted principles of capitalism. In 1976 Adam Smith wrote: "An individual who intends only his own gain is led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention. By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it". Those words in the book "The Wealth of Nations" were to become the cornerstone of what later would be called free enterprise and capitalism in a laissez-faire environment, a system of values with primary emphasis on individual decisionmaking in the economic marketplace. The key insight was that, given the freedom to pursue their own objectives, no external force, no coercion, no violations of any liberty, and no central directive would be required to produce voluntary cooperation and collaborations among individuals in a society, and that this would ultimately benefit all of society.

But, can we really depend on an invisible hand to house us, to cure us when we are sick, to feed us, to educate our children and to look after our handicapped and our elderly?

These criticisms of Adam Smith's guiding hand are valid, of course, and any of us today would have a hard time im-

aging a society without the familiar measures taken by the state in even the most free enterprise-oriented society to supplement the market system. The free enterprise concept has gradually evolved over time into what is today known as the 'market-economy' system, governed by a body of commercial laws and legislation meant to correct deficiencies in the laissez-faire system, but nonetheless a system in which the central focus continues to be the 'as free as possible' exchange of goods and service on the marketplace.

Let me make use of this opportunity to dispel a very incorrect notion of capitalism that is frequently used by demagogues of the Third World: that is the notion that capitalism and fascism and militarism are evils with the same root. As I have already said, one of the basic features of capitalism is the market-economy system that is based on individual freedom; it is not based on central totalitarian control, but on the complete opposite, and as such capitalism and the market-economy system can, on the long run, never flourish under a fascist system with elements such as the denial of human equality, government by the elite, racism, and opposition to international law and order."

### Socialism

"A different set of values", mr. Gomes Casseres continued, "arose in Europe after the industrial revolution. The concept of the state as moving force rather than the individual took hold. The idea of socialism began to spread around the world. In the ultimate and extreme socialist system, the focus is not on the marketplace but on (mostly) state ownership of the means of production and distribution and on central economic planning by high organs of government.



to carry out activities of interest to them. To develop..... is to be or to become. Not only to have".

In 1961, President John F. Kennedy proposed that the 1960's be designated a 'development decade'; later that same year, the U.N. General Assembly adopted a resolution expressing "the desire of the world community to accelerate the development process in the less fortunate areas of the world". In fact, in the perspective of 1981, the past two decades have been more 'decades of disappointment' than 'decades of development'. The disappointment with the results of the 'decade of development' thus led to a decade of OPEC and MultiNational Companies, to ten years of a multitude of meetings and conferences all designed to lay out this new international economic order, and, finally, to a realization that the vague common interest in a global redistribution of wealth covered up a whole host of divisions and differences in political orientation, resource endowment, economic development, and security needs of the so-called Group of 77. In addition to all this, East-West tensions have remained high, and this has more recently led to a decreased concentration on North-South issues.

### Foreign Aid

Foreign aid is often seen as the cure-all for the developing nations. If the rich nations could only dole out enough money to feed the poor and to build roads, schools, bridges and hospitals, and if the developed, industrial nations could only send enough experts to the developing nations, the end result would be development and prosperity for the peoples of the poor nations on this earth. But, according to Mr. Gomes Casseres, things worked out differently.

First of all the target set for foreign aid - 0.7% of the GNP of the indus-

trialized nations - was never met. Although Holland and Sweden contributed almost 1 percent of their G.N.P. by the end of the last decade the average came only close to 0.35%. The USA f.e. contributed a shameful low of 0.22%! And he continues: "Desenchantment with the system of importing expertise became evident early on. As long ago as 1954, a Sri Lanka Prime Minister said: "A foreign expert is a man who comes to find out and leaves before he is found out". More to the point, perhaps, foreign experts were and are expensive to maintain, and they were more often than not just out of school and still wet behind the ears. Mr. Gomes Casseres conceded that there is merit to technical assistance programmes provided they are properly executed. The training of the recipient country's personnel should be a first priority. Another possibility, Mr. Gomes Casseres suggested, is to arrange for the import of experts from countries where conditions are similar. "Careful selection and psychological profiling of the foreign expert are simply a must". He notices a change of attitude with regard to foreign aid taking root in the Third World during the seventies.

"The developing nations started to reject the entire concept of aid dependency and began to demand a much higher transfer of wealth from the rich to the poor nations; instead of some type of philanthropy, aid and assistance became a matter of economic justice. Aid was no longer something to be negotiated or discussed, but something to be demanded as an automatic right. These changed attitudes on the part of the recipient nations, coupled with sky-rocketing prices for minerals and scarce crops out of developing nations and a deteriorating economy of the industrialized nations, led to a hardening of the Western industrialized world towards the Third World. This hardened attitude, of course, resulted in the halved foreign aid percentages already mentioned."

Although the group of developing countries as a whole witnessed a growth (GNP) at an impressive average annual rate of 5% from 1950 to 1960, more than half the population of the developing world other than China continued to live in circumstances of dire poverty and bare subsistence.

### the socialist alternative

Having established that foreign aid and assistance have been marginally successful in bringing about real economic growth, Mr. Gomes Casseres, raised the question which

economic-political system, the centrally planned economy or the market economy based on the principle of capitalism and free enterprise, is best suited for the task of economic growth in developing countries.

Mr. Gomes Casseres first notes that the centrally planned economic system has at times been quite successful in accelerating economic and even social progress. In the period from 1950 to 1976, the average annual rate of economic growth of the centrally planned economies of Eastern Europe f.e. was significantly higher than that of the industrialized countries of the so-called Free World. This system, however, encounters inherent problems itself over a prolonged period of time. The annual growth of North Korea over the period 1970 to 1975 was almost 11 percent as compared to 2 percent from 1975 to 1980; Poland was 7 percent versus 1 percent; and East Germany 3.5 percent in the first half of the decade of the seventies versus 2 percent in the second half. Closer to home, Cuba experienced an economic growth of almost 4 percent per year in the period from 1972 to 1975 and of less than 2 percent in 1975 to 1979.

What looked like dramatic economic progress was in effect a mirage sustained by cheap Soviet oil, Soviet purchases of agricultural products at above-market prices, and liberal Western credit. With these artificial props now removed, basic faults and inflexibilities of central planning are becoming highly visible. The basic trouble with central planning is that it tries to allocate resources and determine production by the exercise of authority rather than by automatic adjustment of the market.

Centrally planned economies moreover remove the incentives that drive the human animal. A typical example is India. India prides itself on being the largest democracy in the world, and, indeed, we have often seen in India an orderly transfer of power after seemingly democratic elections. India nonetheless suffers from a stagnant economy that is unable to feed and house its huge population; its people are said to be unenterprising and slothful. But then, look around you: in many African countries, in Malaysia, in Hong Kong, in Panama and even in Curaçao and St. Martin, Indians are successful entrepreneurs and sometimes the dynamo initiating and promoting economic progress. Within India itself, enclaves of enterprise and initiative exist wherever it

(continued at page 45/46)

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# St. Eustatius: treasure island for archeologists

by Joan S. Schleuder

A crew of American college students and professors ran off with several hundred pounds of Statian garbage this summer and the folks who live on St. Eustatius are excited about their loss. No . . . Statia in't a cleaner island now. It's always been a clean place. In fact, the Americans had to dig for most of their garbage. They called the holes they dug archeological sites and the six weeks they spent on the island an archeological field school.

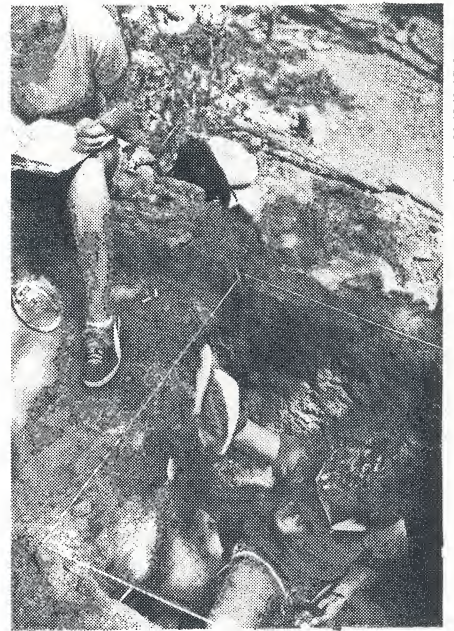


Photo by J. S. Schleuder

Measuring where an artifact was found and recording the information.

The field school was sponsored by the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia and the University of South Florida in Tampa. Three professors, several graduate student-supervisors and 24 students from 10 states in the United States and two provinces in Canada participated in the dig.

"Not only Americans worked on this project, but also several Antilleans from Statia and Curaçao. Two have assisted the Americans in doing an oral history, and many of our local divers helped, with the

underwater survey," said Isch Berkel, head of the Statia historical preservation society. Berkel said the field school, the preliminary survey and the further archeological work planned for Statia are some of the best things that have happened to the island. The islanders have learned about their history, Berkel added. "Before we came to the island, ruins were just ruins to most of the people of Statia. Imagine living on eight square miles of land and never knowing that half of the ruin

sites were even here, let alone that they were once forts or a sugar mill," said Jay Havisser, the Florida State archeologist and one of the field study supervisors. "The people here seemed to have never considered their history before. They would find pottery from the 17th century and say 'oh, pottery, it's just pottery'. We've given them insight into the fact that they have a history and became friends in the process." Havisser explained. "The people on the island have been very, very friendly. I've been on a lot of Caribbean islands and never before have I encountered people who are so aggressively friendly", Havisser added.


### Laboratory

The professor who coordinated the expedition also said, "Statia is often mentioned in historical records and is a very important place, especially for America." "Statia is unspoiled by development and has a wide variety of well preserved sites". William and Mary anthropology Professor Norman Barka added. "When I came here a year ago I found it a real laboratory where people could learn. I talked to local government officials and the his-

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toric foundation and got the OK," Barka said.

"Now the Statia dig is the biggest archeological expedition in the West Indies", he added.

The group has mapped 118 historical sites and 10 of them are prehistoric.

### Survey

Three types of archeological work was done in Statia during the six weeks--- land survey, water survey and digging. Students spent two weeks doing each type of work.

"We survey to find out what's there. Students have logged all of the cultivation on the central island, for example. Now we have a better idea of where everything is and of some of the problems later research will encounter", Barka said.

From the underwater survey, the group has hypothesized that an underground stone bar near the old Gin House at the waterfront must be man-made and once supported a row of warehouses.

"The earliest picture we have of Statia shows that prior to 1742 the waterfront extended out 50 feet more than it does today. Then a hurricane and tidal wave, or perhaps an earthquake must have changed the land and damaged the buildings so badly the Dutch decided not to build again", said Edwin Dethlefsen, who is also an anthropology professor at William and Mary.

### Garbage

Actual archeological digging took place at five sites.

"We like garbage. It tells us a lot about people. So one of the in depth sites is the garbage pit from the late 18th century behind the Gin House. The warehouses, up from the Gin House, are also being dug up", Barka said.

Crook's Castle is included as a dig site because of the interesting cisterns and building structure ruins." No one knows how far back the castle dates or why it's called Crook's Castle", Barka said.

Fort De Windt is included in the dig because it is going to be restored soon and the archeologists



Photo by J. S. Schlander

Photographing a site behind the Gin House. Lt. Gov. Max Pandt examines the work.

want to find out everything they can about the area before the underground artifacts are destroyed by the construction work.

The final site is another garbage disposal area just west of the Dutch Reformed Church.

The collected "garbage" — pottery, glassware and metal artifacts — was washed, analyzed, dated and carefully packed for its journey to the United States.

The students also recorded the precise spot in the ground where each artifact was found.

### Artifacts

"We will spend two years researching the artifacts. We study them to see what they tell us about the people who left them", Barka said.

"We plan to learn more about what went on on the island and a great deal about Dutch culture and American culture, too, because this was a trading center. A lot of illegal things went out from here to the United States", Barka explained.

According to Barka, the artifacts the team recovered from behind the Gin House were of extremely high quality. "The pottery and glass were well fired and made so they would take a long time to deteriorate", he added.

Some of the items, especially the pottery artifacts, date back to 2,000 B.C. They are Indian relics, according to Barka. From the 17th and 18th century artifacts, Barka believes he can determine what life looked like in those days.

### Treasures

The money to fund the field school came from the tuition paid by the students who participated. The island government contributed by providing living quarters and transportation. The salaries of the island people who assisted the American archeologists were also paid by the Island government.

Statia has been surveyed only once before and that was in 1947. Three prehistoric sites were mapped at that time.

"All of the archeological resources here are finite. Once we dig them up, they are gone forever — even if we are careful . . . We, therefore, would like to see Statia preserved exactly like it is". But possible economic development will destroy those resources just the same with one difference. It will then never be known what treasures of the past were hidden on the island. And that seems a fair justification for the work done this summer on St. Eustatius. ■



# Economic survey

by H. C. Beers

After the tremendous growth of foreign reserves in the month of July, the following months recorded only deficits in international payments. During August through October over f. 60 million or about 25% was used on a balance for foreign transfers. This drain of reserves caused the total money supply to decline. The deposits up to f. 100 million held by the island governments with the banking system did not change, at least until September. The Central Government faced some financial difficulties but was able to meet its liabilities without any mayor additional borrowing.

## Foreign reserves.

Foreign reserves decreased substantially during October. The condensed balance sheet of the Central Bank showed an amount of f. 182.8 million as per the end of October compared with f. 214.3 million as per the end of September and f. 245.3 million as per the end of July 1981. During these three months a net amount of 62.5 million or 25% was used for foreign payments.

Besides the Central Bank also the private banking system holds foreign reserves, which remained rather stable at about f. 60 million during the last months. In fact these banks maintain much more foreign claims, but the bulk is held on behalf of non-residents which have deposited these amounts. Only the balance between foreign claims and liabilities of the banks counts as reserves.

A drain in foreign reserves is common in this time of the year when merchants are building up their stocks in view of the coming season. Payments for imports are increasing whereas income from tourism lags behind due to the low season. However the amount of outflow is quite high and influenced by the availability of money resulting from the external transfers by the oil refineries to the island governments, in particular of Aruba, owing to the profit tax payments in July. It is still too early to judge whether the money is spent for consumptive purposes or for investments. Both result in an outflow of foreign exchange but the latter provides employment and creates income.

Despite the large outflow, the level of total reserves held by the Central Bank and the private banks still looks favourable compared to a year ago. On October 23, 1981 an increase was recorded of f. 98.5 million.

## Balance of Payments

The external cash flow for the second quarter of 1981 showed a small deficit of f. 5.6 million, resulting from a deficit in current payments and a surplus on the cap-

ital account, especially government capital which comprises development aid.


The increase in net merchandise imports is in line with inflation, but net proceeds from transportation and tourism did not grow sufficiently on an annual basis to keep pace. Tourism performed rather well on Aruba recording a 15% increase in foreign exchange income compared with the second quarter of 1980. Curaçao recorded only 3% growth, whereas St. Maarten showed a decline of 6%, that may be connected with the closing of the Mullet Bay Hotel. This fall is surprising as the first quarter of this year showed a surge of 34% to f. 73.9 million from 56.3 million for the corresponding period of 1980. A reduction in the outflow of investment income and higher receipts from government services which primarily consists of offshore profit taxes, accounted for the drop in the deficit of the current payments. Offshore taxes amounted to f. 58.2 million during the first half of 1981, which is about the same as for the corresponding period of the previous year.

Capital payments as usual constitute a large inflow of development aid from the Netherlands and a net outflow of private capital. The latter due to the purchase of securities abroad and investments on deposits with foreign banks.

## Exchange Rates.

In the beginning of October the European Monetary System (EMS) faced a realignment of its currency parities. The two strongest currencies, the Deutsche Mark and the Dutch guilder revalued upward 5.5%, while the French franc and the Italian Lira dropped 3% in the band of EMS support levels or the so-called "snake". The other four currencies stayed at their existing levels.

After the realignment was announced the rate of the U.S. dollar fell against the strong currencies. In the Netherlands Antilles the rate of the Dutch guilder rose over 4% from almost f. 0,70 to about f. 0,73 (selling price). During the month thereafter the rate moved around this level. During the first



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days of November the selling rate quoted well over f. 0,74. Imports from France and Italy will be cheaper, but merchandise from the Netherlands and Germany more expensive owing to the changes in currency rates. However, tourists from these last mentioned countries are cheaper off when visiting our islands.

**Monetary Developments.**

The drop in foreign reserves also resulted in a reduction of the total money supply, which showed a record high of f. 1,137.6 million at the end of July 1981. During August however, the net outflow of foreign payments exceeded the money created domestically mainly through the lending activities of the banking system.

The islands governments' deposits with the banking institutions, and as such part of the money supply, remained unchanged during August. At the end of that month the island governments maintained an amount of f. 64 million with the Central Bank and f. 38 million with the private banks. As per the end of July the balances were f. 70 million and f. 32 million respectively. Most of the amounts is held in the name of the island government of Aruba.

Meanwhile the Central Government experienced difficult times to meet its financial needs. The overdraft facility with the Central Bank stayed continuously very near to the maximum of f. 90million. In August the Central Government repaid f. 5 million on its domestic debt consisting of treasury paper and bonds, which amounted to f. 130 million after

the redemption of f. 45 million higher than the previous year.

In October an amount of about f. 30 million of treasury paper matured. The Central Government could not repay the whole amount and wanted to refinance by issuing new paper. The banks, however, were not willing to subscribe to the entire loan. On a balance the Central Government had to repay about f. 10 million, which it received from the island government of Curaçao as partial redemption on the debts occurred because of noncompliance with the tax revenue — sharing arrangement.

**Economic Features**

Shell Curaçao is producing at half of its capacity which is a low record. At the moment 156,000 barrels a day are produced on an average. As main causes are stated developments in the international markets, which makes it difficult to sell oil products. In general the prices are high but demand is decreasing. Under these circumstances it is important for Shell Curaçao to obtain processing deals from Venezuela. Although the Venezuelan minister of Energy Mr. Humberto Calderon visited Curaçao in October, no announcement on this subject was made nor on the matter of participation in Shell Curaçao by the Venezuelan State Oil company Maraven.

Mixed reports were heard on the health of the tourist sector. The hotel company El Curaçao, owner of Curaçao Plaza Hotel, published its annual report for 1980. The financial situation of the company deteriorated so that no further in-

vestments for repair and maintenance are possible. The management company Canadian Pacific Hotels is equally not able to make any investments. However, the report also stated that the first seven months of 1981 were substantial better than the previous year.

On November 1 the renovated Coral Cliff Resort and Beach Club opened its doors. This hotel was established 20 years ago. The new owners have plans to expand the hotel with 26 rooms to 40 rooms.

On St. Maarten the doors of the Mullet Bay Hotel were again opened for the public. They had been closed because of financial difficulties. A new arrangement with the owners, the Government and the Chase Manhattan Bank as well as with the casino management resulted in the reopening. The coming tourist season has to prove to what extent the difficulties are indeed overcome. The same goes for the famous Westermeyer project on St. Maarten. The parent company of Westermeyer in the Netherlands applied for a letter of licence. It is not yet known in how far the project on St. Maarten will be effected by the suspension of payments.

In particular on Curaçao, economic development has not reached a sufficient level to create the necessary jobs. Several projects are in a stage of preparation, such as the international trade centre, container harbour, Paradise Village and a scrap yard. But even these projects will not provide full employment. The government has to come up with a policy for a lasting solution and to offer the necessary incentives. ■

**Table 1**  
Condensed balance sheet Central Bank: f; million

	31-10-81	30-9-81	31-8-81	31-7-81
gold stock	41.4	41.4	41.4	41.4
foreign reserves	182.8	214.3	224.1	245.3
loans to:				
— government	89.8	89.7	88.9	87.3
— banks	—	—	—	6.3
— private sector	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3
sundry assets	6.3	6.3	6.4	7.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>321.6</b>	<b>353.0</b>	<b>362.1</b>	<b>388.6</b>
Bank notes	157.7	157.4	157.2	161.8
deposits held by:				
— tax collectors	3.6	4.7	4.1	5.3
— island governments	32.1	57.7	64.0	69.8
— banks	17.9	22.3	19.5	30.7
— development projects	18.8	23.6	30.3	33.6
— private sector	16.1	14.9	19.0	20.8
— non-residents	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
money in custody	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1
sundry liabilities	27.3	24.3	19.9	18.5
capital and reserves	45.9	45.9	45.9	45.9

**Table 2**  
External cash flow summary; nett amounts; f. million

	1981		1980	
	II	I	II	I
merchandise	-338.8	-307.9	-299.9	-361.5
transportation	80.0	72.5	88.3	104.8
tourism	140.8	208.8	134.8	177.1
Investment income	-10.2	-35.4	-51.9	-17.7
government services	35.6	28.1	20.2	46.4
private remittances	-21.4	-20.2	-21.1	-16.0
transfers refineries	68.7	44.2	78.7	62.3
other services	20.9	26.2	21.8	16.0
balance current payments	-24.4	16.3	-29.1	11.4
private capital	-24.5	-39.2	-2.7	-10.8
government capital	36.2	7.4	23.4	-2.6
statistical differences	7.1	8.9	3.4	5.3
increase reserves	-5.6	-6.6	-5.0	3.3







# The high cost of shipping

## A critical report

Aruba and Curaçao, the main islands of the Netherlands Antilles, have never before had the present abundance of shipping services from their main supply areas, the United States and Western Europe. From Miami, the closest point in the U.S., there are some 15 services per month; in addition, a monthly average of 10 shipping opportunities are offered from U.S. Gulf and North Atlantic ports. Lines from Europe schedule about one sailing per week by large container vessels operating under the Caribbean Overseas Lines (CAROL) consortium. Sea-Land Services, the U.S. container-carrying giant, arrives 4 times per month with cargo from a great number of points of origin transhipped in Kingston, Jamaica. Together with several small and less regular "outsiders" all of this adds up to a virtually limitless capacity for cargo to both islands.

**That should be good news to importers on the islands. After all, an excess of supply over demand is bound to result in fierce competition and declining freight rates. Right? Well, not exactly.**

some \$ 75,000 per round-voyage, the additional cost of the luxury of having three more sailings to the islands per month amounts to well over \$ 2.5M per annum.

In the meantime, other competitors have started operations and although their freight rates are duly "competitive" (meaning slightly below the latest increased level), no great impact on the tariffs of the rate agreement has been noted. If history repeats itself, they may well develop into contributors to the high cost of shipping from Miami — or else drop out, just as a dozen of lines have done over the past decade.

### Trans-atlantic

The CAROL consortium was formed about five years ago by English, Dutch, French and German shipowners for the operation of newly built, large, high-speed container vessels, all virtually sisterships. Each participant contributes one or two vessels to the joint service on a weekly schedule from Western Europe to a great number of Caribbean destinations. The owners and their local agents in the various ports book their cargo independently, but the containers will be shipped on the first available ship, regardless of its ownership. The freight revenue is shared according to an agreed formula.

The vessels employed, operating under their national flags, carry a high capital cost and are very expensive to run. There are no figures published in this connection, but estimates run as high as \$ 25,000 per day. When these ships were still being built in the mid-1970's, committees were formed comprised of officials of the four owners to prepare not only their companies but also the various Caribbean islands of call for the forthcoming service. They did a better job for the owners than for their customers. Many islands, where planning takes longer and capital is harder to come by than the Europeans realized, were not able to receive the CAROL ships as designed when the service was about to start. One of several problems, as in the case of Aruba and Curaçao, was that no specialized container cranes were yet available. At the last moment, travelling shipboard (so-called gantry) cranes had to be added to the ships. The weight of these reduced the deadweight carrying capacity of the vessels, while the space occupied by their running rails meant a reduction of the container slots available. This, plus the consider-

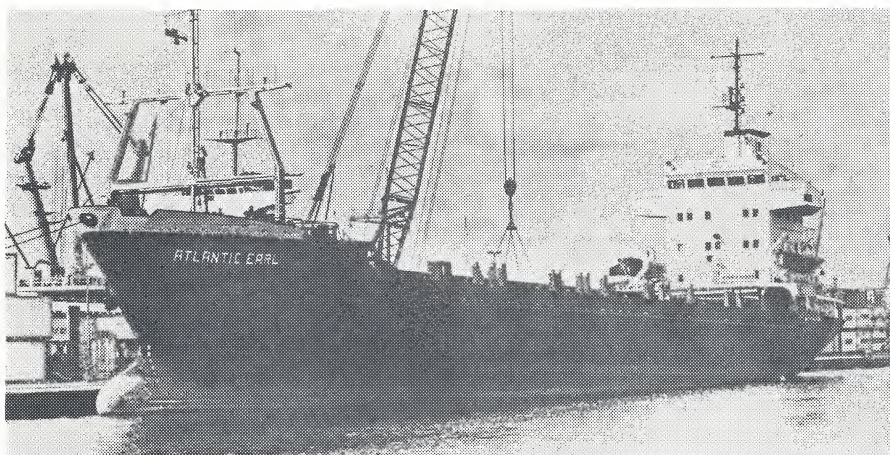


Photo by F. Sulvaran

### Miami-connection.

Take, for example, recent developments in the trade from Miami to the islands. For years, the service to Aruba and Curaçao was maintained largely by two lines (for long periods even by one, utilizing two ships), resulting in a good occupancy rate and a profitable exploitation. Freight rates were increased from time to time to cover rising costs, but remained within a reasonable range when compared to similar routes. The good returns enjoyed by the incumbent carriers, however, attracted competition from a new line. The newcomer offered lower freight rates than the established lines in order to lure away cargo from them. A typical reduction would be ten percent below the prevailing tariffs.

The original lines, before the added competition started, had been happy with a net earning of ten percent of their freight revenues. The newcomer, even if it should obtain a high rate of occupancy as a result of its rate-

cutting, could not expect to make a profit. The old lines, with their decreased carryings, would be suffering, even if they should not lower their rates to meet the competition — which, in fact, sometimes they were forced to do. A wait-and-see game developed, in which the lines tested each other's financial endurance. When none of the competitors showed any sign of withdrawing from the trade, the game changed in due course into "if you can't beat them, join them".

One of the few price fixing cartels permitted by the U.S. Department of Justice is a rate agreement between shipping lines. The third line joined the rate agreement already existing between the two others and gradually the freight rates were increased to allow all three an existence. That rate level obviously had to be higher than the original one, since the operating cost and profit of an additional ship had to be covered by the same amount of cargo movement. With basic cost for each of the vessels employed amounting to



able cost of the gantries themselves, made the cost of the ships even higher.

**Expensive loyalty**

The four companies are members of the West India Transatlantic Steamship Lines (WITASS) conference, which requires contract shippers to sign an agreement not to ship their cargo with carriers outside the conference. Breach of this contract entitles WITASS to claim liquidated damages from shippers, a stipulation which has proved to be enforceable in Europe (it would be unlawful in the U.S.). As a result, shippers who wish to use WITASS lines for some of their cargo are pretty much forced to use them for all of it. It is not surprising that the combination of very expensive ships and institutionalized shipper loyalty has resulted in hefty freight increases by WITASS. This, however, does not mean that the CAROL operation is highly profitable at this time, and the islands probably may have to expect further freight increases in excess of the growth of the direct operating costs of the lines.

**Consumer pays the bill**

The increases in the carrier's tariffs are not accepted without protest on the islands. For example, the Curaçao association of importers of grocery items, VIGLEG, holds meetings with the lines' representatives whenever increases are announced. However,

under the prevailing circumstances they have little leverage. In the long run, they are forced to accept the higher rates and the cost — as always in such cases — ultimately is passed on to the consumer. There are government price controls on a number of essential consumer items, but their level is determined on the basis of the landed cost of the goods and they do not, therefore, extend their influence to freight rates.

To be fair, it should be conceded that the high cost of shipping is not caused solely by factors outside the islands. Productivity of the dockworkers does not compare favourably with that on many other Caribbean islands. Longshoremen on Curaçao have to put in only 5-12½ hours of work to be paid for an eight hour shift, the remainder being allowed for travel time to and from the job — unprecedented in industrial practice on the island — and a generous coffee break. On Aruba, container-carrying vessels have to employ one gang of workers for every 80 tons of containerized cargo on board, a quantity that can be unloaded by one gang in the span of one hour's work. Thus, it can happen that more dock workers are getting paid than do exist on Aruba when several containerships are working at the same time. At any rate, when one ship carrying a heavy load is being discharged, a great number of longshoremen are paid for doing absolutely nothing. The cost of all of this is borne by — you guessed it — the rest of the population.

**Deadlock**

The conditions described, and several others which reduce the return per man/hour paid, are the result of labour contract negotiations over the years, for which weak management can be blamed as much as strong unions can be credited. It should be understood that management, i.e. the stevedoring companies controlled by the ships' agents, have always had an interest in avoiding the ultimate confrontation with the unions. Strikes have been very rare over the past decade and then only for short duration over minor disputes, which were usually settled in the unions' favour. A long strike would mean loss of income for the stevedores/agents which would not be compensated by their principals, the shipowners. On the other hand, if a costly settlement should be made, the expense of it could be passed on to the shipping lines, which would turn around and raise their

freight rates accordingly. The agents who derive most of their income from commissions based on gross freight receipts in fact stand to gain from higher rates and therefore could be considered unfit representatives in the labour negotiations of those who have to bear the burden of higher tariffs.

**Between the Devil and the deep blue sea**

Plans are in an advanced stage to provide both Aruba and Curaçao with new container port facilities. It is not clear whether their inauguration in the next few years will have a beneficial effect on labour costs, considering the existing union situations. It seems certain, however, that the considerable capital cost of these projects will have to be offset by higher port user fees, which would give the shipping lines a reason to further increase their tariffs.

The islands have to import virtually every item used by their populations. There is little import-substituting industry and those factories that do operate have to import their raw materials. The cost of shipping can be estimated at US\$ 200 per year for every man, woman and child. It follows that every across-the-board raise in freight rates by 10 percent would cost a family of four some US\$ 80 per annum extra.

This would be the equivalent of the cost of a gasoline price increase for the average car-owning family of 8 dollars or 14 local cents per liter. Over the past 9 years, the gasoline price has not been allowed to go up by more than 12 dollarscents or 22 local cents per liter in total. Successive governments, fearful of strong political repercussions, have forced the local fuel suppliers to hold their prices. Yet increases in freight rates from Miami in 1918 alone totaled more than 25 percent, with hardly a murmur heard in defense of the consumer.

Unlike the airline industry, shipping is entirely free from government regulation. Importers may be opposed to high rates, but in the final analysis do not suffer unduly as they are able to pass on most of the cost. This leaves the consumers to fend for themselves, and they would not know where to start if they should wish to bring down the shipping cost of goods imported by others. For them, it is a matter of paying the price or stop buying imported goods, a choice that almost literally puts them between the devil and the deep blue sea. ■

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# Legal Development stalled

## A threat to the process of selfdetermination.



by W. Luiten

*The endless constitutional debate and the uncertainty about the future of the six islands have a paralyzing effect on developments. Because of the 'Aruban case' discussions on and preparations for independence have also failed to make headway.*

*Some will think this a fortunate development, others on the other hand view with concern how matters on this point are becoming stagnant or have even gone so far as to give up in disillusion.*

*The Antillean Government tries hard to break this deadlock, but whether it will be successful — and at what cost — is still an open question. Also legal development has come to a virtual standstill. A handful of sombre remarks.*

### Discussion

Since publication of the Antillean Jurists Gazette was discontinued in 1974 because of lack of interest, lawyers in the Antilles have had to make out without a professional journal. No possibility whatsoever to discuss the much needed amendments in legislation, no public debates and control on legal judgments, not even the possibility to learn about these judgments. One sometimes wonders how lawyers have managed to exercise their profession during all these years, especially with regard to those subjects that differ widely from Dutch law. Since not too long there are two professional journals one more trying to fill this gap. It is to be hoped that they will succeed in starting discussions again and keeping them alive.

### Who knows the law?

It is expected of each citizen that he knows the law. Whithout this fiction it would be impossible for any juridical system to function. Naturally there is always a certain tension between the fiction and reality. But in the Antilles this tension is far too great. A person who wants to acquaint himself with the text of a law has to labour through a pile of Official Gazettes, that is if he manages to find such a collection. Easily accessible publications covering the most important laws are hard to find. The lack of such text publications does not contribute to the

quality of the application of justice and forms a serious obstacle for further legal development.

### Co-ordination

Our legislation runs the risk of rapidly becoming obsolete. Whereas in the Netherlands the Civil Code is being thoroughly reviewed, the Constitution systematically brought up to date and all kinds of other laws as well seem to roll off the presses, in the Antilles very little is being done. I do not want to allege that we have to follow the changes in Dutch Legislation in all aspects, but as long as the administration of justice here for an important part has to be taken care of by Dutch judges and the High Court of the Netherlands is still charged with cassation in civil cases, we must not forfeit the existing co-ordination with the Netherlands.

In the Magazine for Antillean Law a discussion is going on concerning the desirability of maintaining cassation by the High Court. Although the viewpoints on this differ widely from each other, the writers still agree that the actual differences between Antillean and Dutch law are threatening to become so great that cassation will be rendered impossible, if this trend is not reversed. The administration of justice in civil cases and on basic laws will undoubtedly be deprived of much of its quality, if the legislators do not start acting rapidly.

### Preservation or change?

Legislation is an instrument for both preservation and change. However, it seems as if through the stagnation in the legislation process, the law is only exercising a preserving function.

Our divorce law does not recognize divorce through mutual consent, when a marriage is on the point of breaking up. One of the partners still has to admit having committed adultery, before a divorce can be granted. If no adultery has taken place, one has to denigrate oneself by telling a lie (the big lie) to obtain one's goal. But by doing this we are helping maintain victorian morals. A citizen who feels that his rights have been infringed upon by a government decision has no adequate possibility to oppose this in court. Possibilities for administrative appeal are mostly non-existent and even those that exist are generally inadequate. Possibilities for administrative administration of justice only exist in very specific cases. Most of the time the only way is to start legal proceedings against the government with the regular Judge, who is neither destined nor prepared for this task. A judicial body having as its task to closely subject government actions to juridical control does not exist, which helps to uphold the undesirable image of government acting as it thinks fit without having to give account and of citizens without a voice.

Law is not only an expression of current views but also gives form to it. Up to now the legislators have not shown much inspiration.

### Juridical culture

This indolence on the part of the legislators naturally cannot be exclusively ascribed to our internal discord. Lack of cadre is also a factor. As is the circumstance that law is perhaps too often regarded as a means to make money and attain social status, rather than as a means to develop society.

The tragedy of this situation is that while we are so entangled in our own affairs and problems, independence is drawing near day by day without us realizing the implications of that process for the future of our islands. ■



# Customs and Habits during the month of December in Curaçao

by E. Jesurun

In Curaçao as in most other countries the month of December is a very particular one. Not only because people are sensitive to the approach of the year's end, but also because in this month there are holidays people cherish especially.

Far from intending to present a scientifically perfect explanation of our traditions, I shall only touch upon the most important ones, highlight them focusing on the good feelings they instill in us. With this I hope they may help inspire us in our every day life, especially in these times of cool business-like attitudes, high pressures and sometimes desperation, times in which so much of the real joy of living runs the danger of getting lost and this to our own personal detriment.

## St. Nicholas

The first important event in the month of December is the celebration of **St. Nicholas' Day on the 5th of December**. This good old man has, for centuries, been able to keep his schedule and to visit with us every year. What is more, he does keep his economic house in order year after year, something for which he is probably en-



vied by airlines and economists all over the world.

I remember very well how, as children, we wondered if St. Nicholas would really come, so that we could be sure to find gifts in our shoes, under our beds or scattered around in the house when we awake the following morning.

There was always some fear that he just might not make it, but there were always the happy tension and wonderful expectations, which were somehow always fulfilled. After so many years I can still savour the joy, a very personal joy, when in my imagination I relive those days again.

There have been changes. We now have scheduled flights with jet planes flying faster than the speed of sound. Nowadays St. Nicholas makes his "joyeuse entrée" two weeks ahead of his scheduled appearance on the 5th, disembarking right in the middle of the crowd in the heart of town, accompanied by his two loyal and inseparable assistants "Zware Piet" and "Sjaak Sjoerd".

The tradition of St. Nicholas' Day was taken from the Dutch, but St. Nicholas was a Spaniard in his time and lived in Spain. This, of course, makes absolutely no dif-

ference to all those children and adults too, who throng by the thousands to receive him with renewed enthusiasm. And maybe I am, among those children around that date, not as a receiver of gifts, but rather experiencing the joy of giving. I start thinking of a few little things with which to surprise my family.

After this there is a short period of relaxation and reflection, which changes into frantic activity two weeks before the 25th of December.

**CHRISTMAS** for the Christian is the most significant day of the year. For the man in the street there stands a period of intense preparation.

Dwellings are the subjects of a major overhaul, inside and out.

Roofs are repaired, houses are repainted, curtains renewed and furniture revarnished or repainted. This is the time that calls for a general sprucing up. The floor is recovered with brand new linoleum. The whole neighbourhood smells of fresh paint, varnish and newness. A combination of smells that evokes warm memories of my childhood, old acquaintances, neighbours and friends of yesteryear.

Liquor and other beverages are abundantly stocked weeks before and of course quality is checked in advance with a "few" trial sips. The traditional "ham" must be bought, which entails some scurrying around to find the desired size, price and quality.

All this is evident in the streets and shops all over the island.

Buses are overcrowded and handle the traffic with difficulty. The rush extends to the buying of new clothes and other personal items for the whole family.

The man in the streets wants Christmas to find him reborn, ▶



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redressed and in a renewed environment.

Formerly, as far as was possible, in each home a "pesebre" (a manger) was installed, constructed to the best of the artistic feeling of the family.

Children used to go from house to house, visiting their acquaintances to look at the mangers and assess the differences, which sometimes may have led to much comment and discussion among them for days.

I have no explanation for the cause, but during the last 20 years I have seen the displacement of the manger by the Christmas tree. It should be noted that Santa Claus as a North American institution has not yet been generally accepted here in Curaçao. Only a few honour this tradition. The sending of Season's Greetings cards to local friends and acquaintances and foreign friends, as well as the giving of Christmas gifts are now widely accepted customs as in any part of the world. Irving Berlin's song "I am dreaming of a White Christmas" and "Rudolph the Red-nosed Reindeer" are much played during the week preceding Christmas and mind you on an island with a temperature of 85 degrees.

I remember the "misa di aurora" (daybreak masses) at 5 o'clock every morning during the 9 days preceding Christmas. For a while the attendance at these masses slackened, but at present the churches are full again at these early masses. They are now even being transmitted by a local radio station.

In former days the young men were eager to attend these services, not so much because of religious convictions, but rather due to their keen interest to meet and follow the young ladies after mass in hopes of catching and returning a friendly smile.

Still very much alive in my memory are the furtive glances, the vibrant heart beats, the special smell of the morning, the soft cool breeze and the rosy dawn sky.

Slowly but surely "Bispu di Pascu" (Christmas Eve) would arrive.

By then the activities reach stam-

pede proportions. The "boticas" (drugstores) are literally invaded by customers who wish to buy the famous "awa di laba cas" (the indispensable house cleaning potion). This concentrate is concocted by pharmacists according to old formulas and is mixed at home by the house-wife with the water that she will use to scrub the floors, enveloping the house in an agreeable scent.

The scrubbing of the floor with this potion constitutes a kind of ritual, which is the way in which to chase away disharmony and bring in peace.

Only then can the house-wife, assisted by members of the family, put the finishing touches to the house and can curtains and rugs be installed. Through the day there is hectic running in and out of shops by people overloaded with packages. The streets are filled with Christmas music, wafting from the stores and music and record shops, adding to the mood, typically pertaining to Yuletide.

The bars are full of men, some starting their celebration early and arriving home under all conditions and those that "ta pone curpa na prim", which means taking sufficient liquor to get into the right spirit for the festive occasion.

I remember some of our old acquaintances and neighbours, full grown and otherwise very serious persons, once in the proper spirit singing "Silent Night" followed by a complete repertoire in Dutch, Spanish and Papiamentu, ranging from school songs, love themes to nursery rhymes. Nightfall sees the last customers carrying home the indispensables.

### Aguinaldo

On some street corners and in front of certain shops music groups of young people, uniformly dressed belt out their "aguinaldo" songs at top volume (these are mostly Latin American Christmas Carols, a genuine cultural import from Venezuela). At these gatherings, huge crowds congregate around these groups and they can hardly fail to get

under the spell of the rhythmical renditions.

Another more successful and much older import from the Mainland is the "Cena de Noche Buena" (a late Christmas Eve Dinner) which is had in the family circle with close friends with abundant liquor and food, of which the "ham" and the "ayaca" (a kind of tamales, consisting of chicken and pork in a corn paste, wrapped in banana leaves) are the most traditional dishes. Others hasten to the different churches, which are jam-packed, for the "Misa del Gallo" (Mass of the Cock, Midnight Christmas Mass).

Formerly when the midnight mass was not so much in vogue, people used to go to the "Misa di Mardugá" (Dawn Mass) at 5 o'clock in the morning, where you could witness the most varied array of Christian finery.

After the mass it was customary for children to visit their godparents; neighbours drop in to exchange good wishes and have a Christmas drink accompanied by a little snack of ham or an "ayaca". As everyone, no matter in which income bracket, has liquor and

(continued at page 42/43)

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# An opportunity for development

## Problems and challenges facing faculty of technology

by Ronald Gill

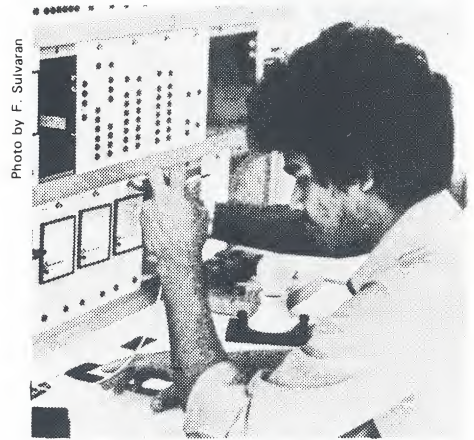


Photo by F. Sulvaran

Classroom

In 1978 the Faculty of Technology was established within the University of the Netherlands Antilles. Being a small scale university, formulation of specific goals is highly necessary in order to serve the nation's needs.

Up till now the Faculty has failed to develop a policy in accordance with its specific nature of operating within a small scale situation. A failure due to the fact that almost all attention had to be devoted to managerial problems, inevitable to a young institution. Yet it is imperative that such a policy be developed soon, as the first group of students will graduate within a year.

Once it succeeds in overcoming 'infant' problems on its way to maturity, the young Faculty will no doubt represent a tremendous opportunity for development both in the Antilles and the Caribbean region.

### SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL OR...

The University of the Netherlands Antilles is serving a nation of 240,000 people dispersed over six islands of different size and location in the Caribbean region. In 1978 the existing School of law, the School of Business Administration and the School of Technology, operating separately, were incorporated by law in the University of the Netherlands Antilles.

Presently these faculties offer courses to six hundred students, two hundred of which study at the Faculty of Technology.

On top of being small and dispersed geographically, the Netherlands Antilles also faces a language problem. Although the official language is Dutch, the common language on the three Windward Islands is English, whereas people on the Leewards, where most of the population is concentrated, speak papiamentu. Thus not only their size and the distance between the islands, but also the language is bound to cause problems for the proper operation of a system of higher education.

In spite of these difficulties the Government, with a view to development, felt the need to combine the different units into one centre of scientific education.

### Objectives

The main objective for the establishment of the Faculty of Technology was the need

for such higher education in a local setting. It was understood also that once independence would be reached, the Netherlands Antilles should direct itself towards the Caribbean region in trying to safeguard its own development.

First the Dutch educational system, excellent in itself, but alien to the institutes of higher education in the region, had to be replaced by a more functional system. It was decided therefore that the Bachelor of Science Degree would be offered to graduates of the Faculty of Technology. What this the main prerequisite for recognition within the region of both the institute and its graduates was achieved. This also opened up the possibility for graduates to continue their studies at the Master of Science level at institutes of Technology within and outside the region.

The Faculty consisting of the Departments of Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, and Architectural and Civils Engineering Technology as a combined Department, firstly aims at educating young people as independent professionals with strong emphasis on responsibility for society, the quality of which, to a certain extent, depends on their future performance.

Secondly, the Faculty is commissioned to conduct research for educational purposes and for private and government institutions in the country.

Finally, the Faculty is committed to develop public oriented activities generating an awareness of actual and future problems related to the development of the Antillean society.

### The Young Faculty's problems

Since its inauguration in 1978, the Faculty of Technology faced typical problems:

The existing system of higher education in technology, the need for a curriculum based on scientific concepts, the proper management of a faculty consisting of several Departments. Add to this the lack of rules for student participation and above all the need to motivate staff members with regard to the new system and it becomes clear that the Faculty faced severe problems.

Finally, continuity in the courses offered was jeopardized by the lack of local qual-

ified staff, which forced the Faculty to call upon the services of Dutch tutors sent out on a temporary basis. All this has resulted into the focussing of all efforts on solving daily and short term managerial problems to safeguard the quality of education. Little time was available for setting up a framework to counter the difficulties in a structural way.

So far, the Faculty has demonstrated that, in spite of great initial difficulties, solving these problems was not beyond its capacity. Proposals have been submitted to the Faculty Council to arrive at an effective framework of management, including the conferment of a strong mandate for action and decision-making. Thus the Faculty will be able to direct itself to the important task of determining its goals to serve national development.

### A Role for Development

So far, both the Government and the University have failed to formulate a policy for the use of technology to serve development. Yet, commitment to work out such a policy is of great importance.

If not the Government, then the Faculty of Technology should itself initiate a policy for the use of technology by formulating objectives relevant to the nation's potentials for development. In order to achieve this an action programme should be set up, which would include activities to be carried out by the Faculty itself and activities to be undertaken by the Government. A basic survey of the local needs for technology should be conducted, taking into account constraints and potentials for development. Labour market requirements, the level of knowledge needed and the distribution of levels of knowledge and skills throughout the labour market should be analysed.

Also short term and long term scenarios could be designed.

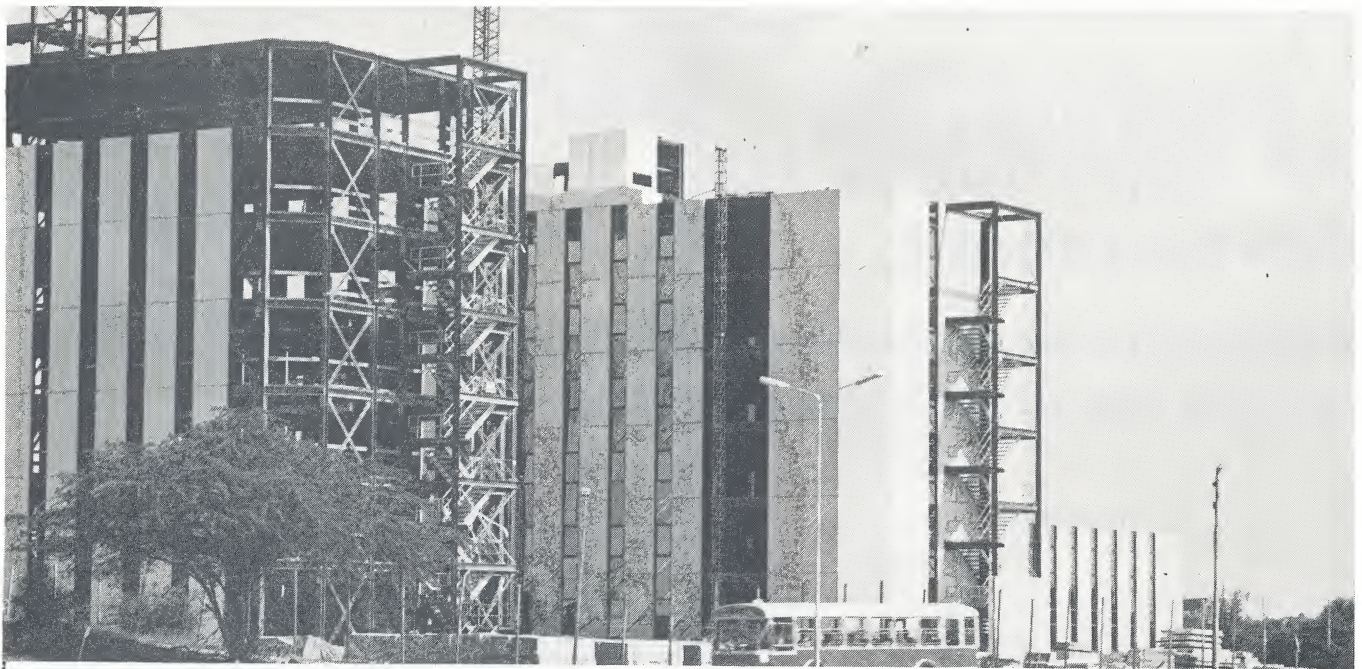
This is a task for the Government.

### Priorities

What can be done by the Faculty of Technology to perform its role in the development process?

First: it is imperative to concentrate on ▶





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local technology needed, to determine what technology should be provided by the own institutions and what technology should be imported, whether for reasons of cost or sophistication. With reference to this, in efforts to harness solar and wind energy which abound on the islands of the Netherlands Antilles, a thorough study of technology already available is necessary to avoid duplication and waste of scarce financial resources. Rather, concentration of efforts on the preparatory work, including data collection of local conditions, the determination of the sun and wind potentials, and research to improve the ability to choose the system most appropriate, should be given priority.

Being highly dependent on foreign countries and cultures the Antillean people have adopted the standards existing in the metropolitan countries, thereby impeding the development of local technology. On top of this, the political dependency of the Antilles on the Netherlands, which in turn produces financial and technological dependency, has an adverse effect on local technology development.

#### Adapting the System

Second: the small scale of the Antilles has a specific impact on the organization of scientific education in technology. It does not permit a programme which aims at educating people for highly specialized disciplines. Professionals graduating from the Faculty of Technology must be able to accept employment in a wide area of sub-disciplines within the main discipline of graduation, merely because of possible lack of continuity of work within one specific discipline. Also in this aspect the Dutch educational system was of little help and

own programmes had to be developed. For this reason it was decided to combine architectural and civil engineering in one Department. To safeguard quality this Department operates a five-year programme, while the other singular Departments of the Faculty run four year courses.

#### Regional Cooperation

Third: the Faculty should conduct research identifying problems common to Caribbean nations having the same characteristics of scale and potentials. It should develop ties with regional institutions of education and research to save time and investment of limited financial resources.

For housing this will mean the design of housing at low cost; for building construction research into the design of energy-efficient buildings for tropical regions with a wide range of uses; for environmental engineering research into the disposal of e.g. industrial waste with a view to protecting the Caribbean sea, a tremendous resource for tourism, from pollution. Also the allocation of research subjects, as part of an integrated research programme, to different institutions will permit specialization producing findings of greater value. Such research should be problem-oriented and focus on immediate application of newly discovered technologies. This does not exclude, however, basic research when trying to find solutions for local problems.

Apart from the existing formal relationship, aimed at cooperation in research and education, with the Eindhoven and Twente Universities of Technology in the Netherlands, the Faculty is in the process of establishing ties with Florida International University, the University of Surinam and other universities in the region.

#### Quality

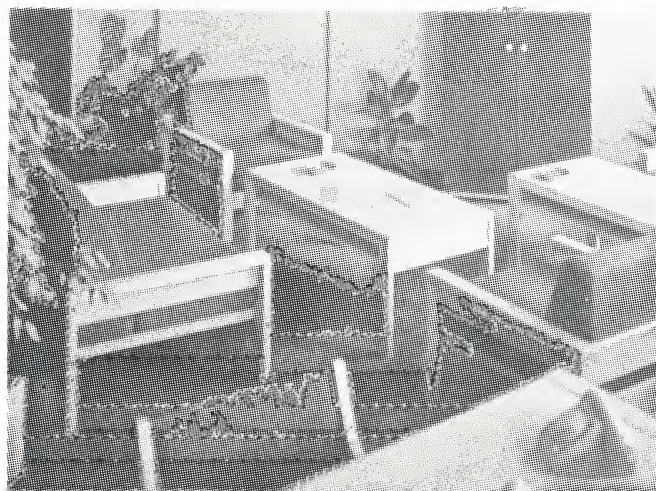
Fourth: the concept of quality in standards for education and research should be applied. For a small scale nation this is a matter of to be or not to be.

Such application will maximize services rendered to society. It also leads to acceptance and recognition abroad. In the long run it might even open up the possibility for the Faculty to act as a regional centre for basic and advanced studies, using region-based technology and human resources as valuable products for export. In this concept development of scientific capacity and the creation of an indigenous scientific staff are top priorities.

All this cannot be achieved without Government recognition of the potentials of the Faculty of Technology. In turn it will require credibility and conviction on the part of the Faculty in the fulfilment of its task.

The first period of 'infancy' being completed, the task that lies ahead is consolidation and expansion of activities. Now is the time for reflection on how to convert potentials into actions. Recognizing this, the Government should assist the Faculty in the achievement of its aims by providing the necessary funds. In doing so the Government would take positive action, using the Faculty of Technology as a tool for national development.

Ronald Gill is presently head of the Department of Architectural and Civil Engineering Technology at the University of the Neth. Antilles. Mr. Gill served earlier with the Municipal Department of Works of Rotterdam and the Town Planning Department of Jamaica. ■



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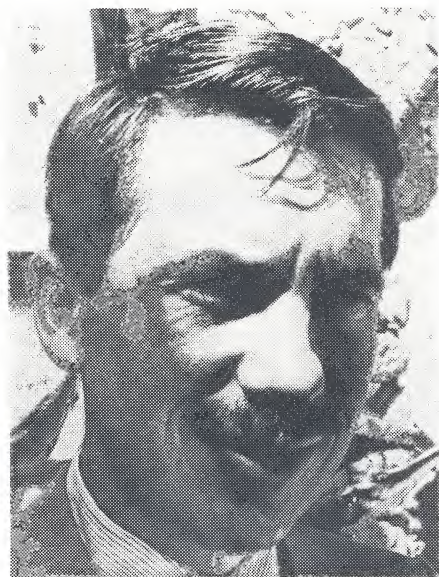
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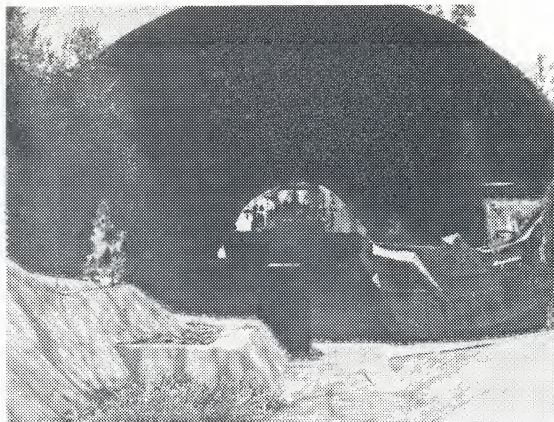


## PEOPLE

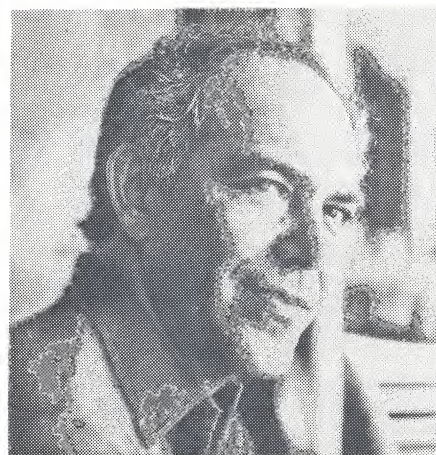
Still hopeful to get the Queen of Saba project, which ran into severe difficulties earlier this year (see AR 1,4), of the ground mr. H. A. J. Luns (35) conducted negotiations with the Antillean authorities during November last. Mr. Luns felt that his 8 hour testimony be-



fore members of parliament had succeeded in clearing up misunderstandings about the gold-coin project. If the Government is indeed prepared to give the green light soon, the first coins should be up for sale by October 1982. Mr. Luns, who is the son of NATO's secretary Joseph Luns, expects that the Queen of Saba could capture a 15% of the international market. Even if the Antillean Government does not partake as a shareholder, it would still receive 1% of the gold value of every coin sold.



Who says that the world is bereft of inspiring dreamers? Not Maarten Stenfert (23) who spend his summer vacation with quixotic architect and doer-philosopher Paolo Soleri. Building a most futuristic town in Arizona's middle of nowhere desert, Soleri experiments in what he calls arcology (a combination of architecture and ecology). The maximum use of sun and wind as sources of energy and the minimum use of space, creating an environment in which statu disappears, modern traffic is kept out and nature within close reach, struck Maarten as maybe an experimental dream but with plenty of workable ideas also for Curaçao. Presently studying architecture in Delft, Maarten — son of ANTEMS's director S. H. Stenfert — hopes to report in detail in one of AR's next issues.



Visiting all six islands during November last mr. D. R. Bleijleve (42), who recently joined the staff of the Foundation for Cultural Co-operation between the Netherlands and the Antilles (STICUSA), acquainted himself with the cultural aspects of the respective Antillean communities. Mr. Bleijleve started his career as editor at the newsdesk of one of Holland's broadcasting (RNWO). Before joining STICUSA he held the position of secretary to The Council of Arts in the Netherlands. At STICUSA mr. Bleijleve will head the department taking care of co-operation with regard to literature, theater and the media.

*Archbishop Felix*



*Jamaica's Carter*



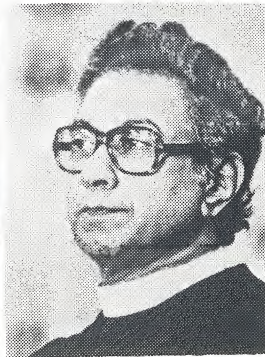
*Dorinda Sampath*



*Trinidad's Pantin*



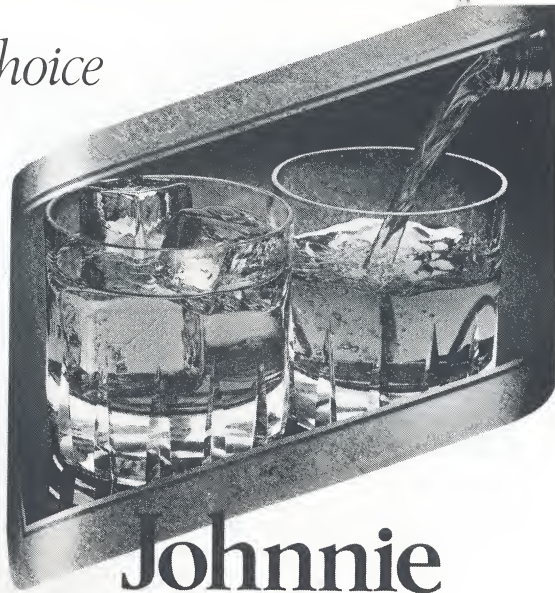
*Neehall*



Scores of well known Caribbean church leaders descended on Curaçao on the occasion of the third general assembly of the Caribbean Conference of Churches. The Conference was founded in 1973 and is known for its dynamic approach to social problems. Dr. Roy Neehall, general secretary of the CCC, said he expected the meeting to be a thorough soul searching to determine the direction the ecumenical body should take in the coming years. Archbishop Pantin from Trinidad looked forward to new initiatives as many of the delegates were coming to a CCC event for the first time. Also present were Jamaica's Archbishop Carter, founding father of the CCC, Mrs. Dorinda Sampath who did much to secure a fair representation of women in the CCC and Archbishop who for several years was head of CCC's spiritual renewal department. Not present were Dr. Phillip Potter of the World Council of Churches and wellknown Bishop Dom Helder Camara. Both were prevented to attend because of urgent obligations elsewhere.



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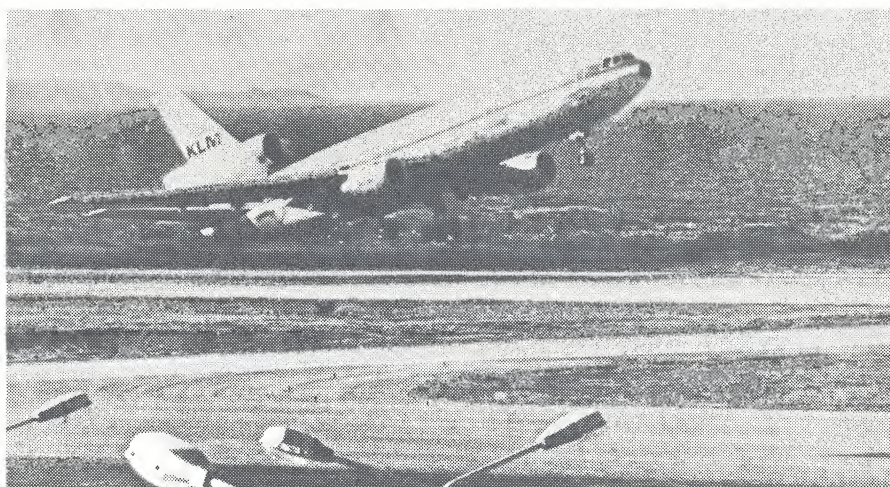


Photo by F. Sullivan

## Aviation protocol with Holland jeopardized

Early in 1981 the Dutch and the Antillean authorities on aviation matters signed a protocol, which in fact boiled down to safeguarding the interests of KLM and ALM.

### What were their respective interests?

KLM wanted to maintain Aruba and Curaçao as a stronghold in its Mid-Atlantic route between Europe and the countries of Central and South America. It claimed the monopoly for traffic between Holland and the Netherlands Antilles and a preferential position as to the traffic from other European countries to and via the Netherlands Antilles.

ALM in turn was given the green light to participate in this traffic by leasing aircraft from KLM in the near future, to get their share in the profits without having to participate in pool-agreements with the Venezuelan company Viasa.

Without such a protocol ALM would not have been able to do any long term planning; nor would the company be in a position to meet the strong desire of its pilot's association to get ready for wide bodies. Moreover failure to arrive at an agreement might even have led to a termination of the existing contract between the two airlines concerning the employment of ALM stewardesses on KLM's mid-atlantic flights and of technical and other forms of assistance so far rendered by KLM.

### Package

This protocol put an end to all kinds of flirtations ALM was having with Air Florida and other carriers.

Seeing the time needed for proper training of pilots and the other problems involved in a transatlantic operation, KLM knew

very well that for the time being there would be peace in all respects.

ALM was happy because they saw a possibility to solve internal problems with their pilots, knowing also that KLM was by far the best partner, who at least was not tossing around ideas on "how to kill a mockingbird".

The Antillean government, represented by its Minister of Traffic and Communication Mr. John van der Kuyp, requested two additional approvals from Holland (read KLM):

1. To leave the possibility open to operate charters for tourism from European countries to the islands of the Netherlands Antilles, and
2. To install a committee to study the fare structure and related rules and regulations for the present and future traffic between the two countries.

KLM gave a "nihil obsat" to both questions.

Sub 1. KLM with its experience in Europe knew too well that not even the biggest and financially strongest tour operator would sign a contract for a back to back charter-operation when being restricted as to onward traffic to other countries such as Venezuela.

KLM said very politely that they would not object to such charters provided it was the intent to carry bonafide tourists from Europe to the islands.

Sub. 2. KLM did not fear an investigation as to fares and rates. Skyrocketing operating costs and the financial situation of the Venezuelan carrier Viasa were proof enough that reductions in fares were almost impossible.

Mr. van der Kuyp proudly presented the package to parliament and for a while there was silence, but not for long.

### Strange ads.

With the withdrawal of the Aruban political party MEP from the Central Government Mr. van der Kuyp had to transfer his portfolio to Minister Jules Eisden before returning to his old job in Aruba.

In August/September brochures appeared in Holland, partly in Dutch and partly in Papiamentu, announcing a Christmas and a Carnival charter to Aruba and Curaçao. Small ads in Dutch newspapers invited participants to travel to Aruba and Curaçao at considerably reduced rates. No mention whatsoever was made of hotel arrangements etc, being the minimum requirement as included in the protocol.

Neither Minister Eisden nor the highest official in the Department of Air Traffic knew anything about an application for a charter-operation between a European city and Aruba/Curaçao. Because Brussels was mentioned as port of departure insiders believed it was just one of the many attempts to get passengers from Brussels to New York and to continue from there to the Caribbean.

Finally it was discovered that a Belgian charter company called Sobelair would make a Boeing 70 available and although not openly advertised, prospective travelers were told they would be transported from Holland to Brussels by surface ways and means.

### Impossible

Even then nobody, including Minister Eisden, could imagine how one could make any money flying 180 people to the two destinations, returning empty, coming back empty and then loading 180 people back from Aruba and Curaçao to return to Europe, all this for a total estimated revenue of about 300.000 Dutch guilders. ▶



And who was the unknown Mr. Thomas in Amsterdam who did not have any association with the travel-agents community in Holland nor any approval of the International Air Transport Association? Mr. Thomas appeared to be one of the many small shopkeepers dealing in cheap tickets for airlines also trying to make a quick buck in the deregulated world of airline operations of today Mr. Thomas is (to put it mildly) anything but a renowned tour operator catering to bring the European money spenders to our islands. Minister Eisdén was inclined to say NO, should ever an application be filed to operate charters from Brussels to Aruba/Curaçao, as luring private persons from Holland via Brussels to the Antilles would be completely against the spirit as well as the text of the protocol referred to above.

**Unbelievable**

The highly esteemed minister found himself with the hottest potato ever when Mr. Thomas claimed that he had received an unrestricted approval for two charters from the former Minister John van der Kuyp. An approval which had been given without any consultation with the head of the Air Traffic Department and very shortly(!) after the protocol was signed. Probably the ink was not even dry yet. In summary proceedings before the Anti-

lean court Mr. Thomas fought out his case. He felt his position strong, because he held approval for 2 flights, which in his opinion should be explained as covering 2 charter groups, one in December and one in February, actually meaning 4 ocean crossings and of course also giving him the right to accommodate people from the Netherlands Antilles to Brussels (and Holland) on the empty legs of the charter flights. In fact that would give some cream in the coffee and that is exactly what he was after, when he asked for 'unrestricted' operations. Even before the lawsuit an advertisement appeared in the local papers offering travel at a low fare to Europe.

It is almost unbelievable that a man, like Mr. van der Kuyp was so innocent to believe the Thomas-story, thereby running the risk that Holland (KLM) declare the protocol null and void.

On top of this Minister Eisdén also discovered that no committee members had been appointed to study the fares and rates situation as had been agreed. He immediately installed the committee hoping its members might come up with a solution for the above mentioned problem at short notice. But as already indicated such a solution is not easily to be found and certainly not at short notice. In the end the minister had to back down. The case was dropped in court and Mr. Thomas got his two flights.

**Lesson**

What is to be learned from this case? Simply this . . . that many people visit our islands with the most attractive plans to bring in tourists. In Curaçao at Santa Martha Bay one can still see the foundations of an enormous hotel project. In Bonaire the birds are celebrating the funeral of the Sorobon hotel project. At Curaçao airport the model of the Host project disappeared together with the money put into it. Costly Golf-course-projects and plans for all kinds of paradises were launched in the past, all in the name of his holiness 'Tourism'.

The story about Mr. Thomas shows once more that a lot of people are very clever in dressing a window-dummy and selling it as a human being, just to make a quick buck.

Tourism as well as any other kind of business is hard bargaining by professionals and although very often government and government officials are involved, their views and reactions can do a lot of harm to the goals private enterprises are slowly trying to reach.

KLM will certainly not react as might be expected. The loss of 180 passengers is not worth it.

But one must ask: what remains of the value of a protocol and who can trust who?

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# Blind care on Aruba

## Law of decelerating process does not apply

Care for the handicapped in a small scale situation like Aruba's is a story by itself. The need is as large and urgent as anywhere in the world. But the resources both expert and finance wise are extremely limited. A situation which calls for great creativity and stamina on the part of the volunteer workers who have taken it upon themselves to render this service to their handicapped fellowmen. A situation which seems to have at least one great advantage: no danger of the human element being lost to bureaucracy and professionalism. The following account of blind care on Aruba may show that small can indeed be beautiful.

Only eight years ago no service of any kind for the blind and visually impaired existed on Aruba. It was in December 1972, that a few people decided that something had to be done. But they had no idea what to do, nor what number of people they were talking about. They estimated ten or maybe twelve. Arubans are too proud to show their needs in public. They rather starve than beg for help.

By the beginning of 1974 a catholic nun, the head of the White-Yellow Cross Association, had managed to gather over a hundred addresses of visually handicapped! A few weeks later the Aruban Foundation for the Blind was officially founded. Not long afterwards its Dutch name was changed into papiamento, the abbreviation of which reads FAVI. And much more important four blind people joined the board, two of which as president and secretary.

### Start

Within a year the foundation moved from charitable activities to proper rehabilitation services. On January 9, 1975, a rehabilitation programme for adults as well as a home-teaching programme were started. All done by volunteers trained by the blind members of the board.

A pre-school programme was started that same year, also with the help of volunteers. In this case they were teachers who compensated their lack of expertise in this field by studying whatever relevant materials FAVI could lay its

hands on. The idea was to help children prepare themselves before being sent to residential schools in Holland and thereby have a better chance of succeeding. Nowadays FAVI tries to keep the children as much as possible on Aruba. Sending them to institutions overseas usually implies a farewell for ever. One dramatic story tells of two multiple handicapped boys, the parents of whom do now after twenty years have no knowledge of where their children are.

### Training

Looking back at that first beginning one marvels at the quality that was achieved by people, who had no prior experience nor training for this purpose and who received no remuneration for their work. The last fact still applies to the more than hundred volunteer workers, who today help FAVI fulfil its charter. There is one difference, however, with those early days. For as much as possible the workers are being trained. Already in 1975 FAVI applied to the Netherlands for technical aid and in 1976 two rehabilitation experts came to Aruba to conduct an intensive crash course for the team of volunteers.

One of the board members had in the meantime travelled to Holland to visit institutions for the visually handicapped to acquaint herself with modern techniques. The acquired knowledge was passed on to the FAVI-team.

Very soon too the need was felt for expert assistance with regard to so-

cial work and counseling. Although it took some trouble to convince the Island Government a first social worker was attached to FAVI in February 1976. A year later the Government allowed her to go to Holland for further training. She is still with FAVI today.

This practice of training people on the spot and sending some abroad to learn additional skills has been continued over the years.

### Information

In June of 1976, FAVI started a bi-monthly newsletter because it was continually confronted with a tremendous lack of information, both on the part of the visually handicapped and on the part of the volunteers as well as the Aruban community in general. The newsletter is published in Papiamento and Dutch.

For the same reason FAVI launched a spoken magazine with the help of an all-round expert sent over for that purpose by the Netherlands. The first edition appeared in September 1976 and was sent to an initial sixty subscribers. Not long afterwards a new foundation was established to devote itself exclusively to the publication of spoken magazines and books. ▶



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## SOCIAL CARE

### Incredible

In May 1978 another turning-point was reached when one of the FAVI board members attended a conference on visually impaired children in Minneapolis (USA). As a result from the information received, it was decided to launch a programme of integrated education later that year. An Aruban school-teacher was found willing to undertake the job of itinerant teacher. The Island Government agreed to have her follow a crash training in Holland and Denmark and pay her salary! In fact FAVI was the first to hit on the idea of letting the government pay the salaries of its full time workers. Other organizations followed suite.

The latest addition to FAVI's professional team is a lady, who again is paid by the government but employed by the foundation and will combine the work of adult rehabilitation and infant home teaching. Such a combination may seem incredible, but the small scale situation forces FAVI to search for this kind of solutions to meet the needs. The FAVI people are very ambitious and try to dedicate just as much attention to the new-born baby as the one hundred years old person, who lost his or her sight and who, in their view has just as much right to FAVI's services as the new-born. All these services by the way are rendered free of charge.

### Co-operation

At an early stage of the pre-school programme, which was undertaken with a total lack of expertise, it was nevertheless discovered that four of the first six participating children were also mentally retarded. These children had been born after the first rubella epidemic that ever occurred in Aruba.

In 1977 the four youngsters were placed in a day-care centre for mentally retarded. Although this institution is being run by the Aruban Foundation for the Mentally Retarded, subsidized by the local governments, the FAVI itinerant teacher, together with a volunteer worker and the social worker, are intensively involved in the teach-

ing process of these, and two more visually impaired and mentally retarded children. Close co-operation between the workers of the two foundations grew by its own accord.

### Fathers

Intensive infant home teaching became a necessity in the beginning of 1978, when a new-born blind baby was discovered, a case of retrolental fibroplasia, and because of a visually impaired child that was reaching school age. For lack of specialized workers, and with the aid of information brought

back from Minneapolis the FAVI decided to take the task on itself.

The part-time adult rehabilitation worker, a volunteer who had been with FAVI several years, started the programme. In spite of her great motivation it soon became evident clear that more professional help was required. In particular the approach of the parents was psychologically too problematic for a worker who had no training in this field. Curiously enough it was found that mothers were the most difficult to deal with. The father's willingness to co-operate was and still is greater than the mother's.

### Modest

Until August last FAVI had not even a place to work from! The social worker shared a tiny office with a colleague of the govern-

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ment's social service department in their building. The rehabilitation worker worked from her own home as did the itinerant teacher. All administration and organizational work as well as aids and appliances supply was done in and from the private homes of board members. The group rehabilitation programme is enacted in a public club building with full cooperation of the club and free of charge. The office FAVI has recently acquired is, although very modest, an important step forwards.

This modesty, however, is at the same time FAVI's great strength. Lacking a sophisticated organizational back-up and the assistance of teams of physio-therapists, psychologists, occupational therapists etc. FAVI is forced to remain innovative all the time.

One of the great risks FAVI runs constantly is that a worker may for whatever reason drop out. There is no sense in placing a want-ad in such a case to get a skilled replacement. There is none. Every worker has to be trained by FAVI itself or sent abroad, which is a very costly affair.


This means in fact that FAVI is forced to start anew time and again. The experience, however, has taught that every new start brings innovations that were never tried before. Indeed FAVI will not easily fall prey to the 'law of decelerating progress'.

The contents of this article were taken from a speech by mr. R. Sint Jago at the International Symposium on Visually Handicapped Infants and Children, Tel Aviv (Israel), June 1981.



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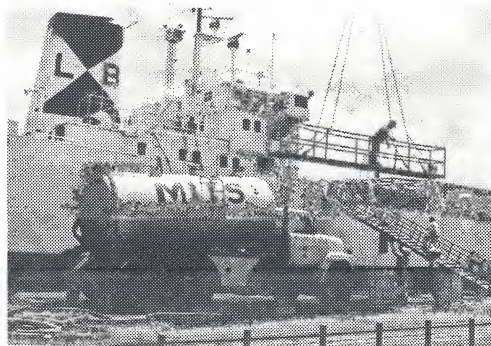
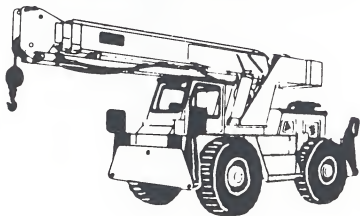
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# Derek Walcott: a personal encounter

by W. Rutgers

Mid August the well-known poet and playwright Derek Walcott spent a long weekend on Aruba to hold a few lectures and a workshop for stageactors, authors and stage managers.

The author, who was born in St. Lucia in 1930, is also in the picture at present for another reason. Frank Martinus Arion has translated his best-known play *Dream on Monkey Mountain* (1967), which was once again performed during the Carifesta in Barbados last July. The renowned theatrical group Tie-Drie, which is intensely promoting productions of the Third World, is making preparations to present it under direction of the Curaçolene Edsel Samson.

Because of his critical attitude towards the recently held Carifesta Walcott also attracted the necessary attention. Three reasons to try to get better acquainted with the man and his work.

## Independent

Derek Walcott has sometimes been characterized as "The literary Humanist in the Caribbean", because in him we find combined a very profound reading of both European and non-European cultural history, a great mastery of language and a mild vision on life and on his fellow man.

He refuses consistently to take up position as a partisan and is a man of compromises. Thus he takes a stand against the dominant colonial British influence of his youth, but does not rush into the opposite. He values and uses both European and African elements, because they both belong to the cultural history of the Caribbean area.

In surroundings that were mostly Catholic and where Patois or French was spoken, his family was Methodist and he applied himself to the English language, which he cherished and explored in all its diversity, and refused to identify himself onesidedly with Caribbean variants of that language. Yet he uses all four of the languages, if he considers this functional and magnificent examples are to be found in his poems. His vision on life does not prevent him from judging, but he will not condemn before having profoundly and deliberately considered the matter. This independent attitude is not always appreciated, but how typical this is of him becomes evident when I confront him with R. Cudjoe's rather bold statement concerning his work: "This anti-democratic and nihilistic Naipaulian tendency has been embraced by other Caribbean writers such as John Hearne, Orlando Patterson, and Derek Walcott". His reaction is guarded: those are rather divergent persons mentioned there and what does Cudjoe mean by "anti-democratic"? The fact that you criticize your society is difficult to accept for the people here. He points out the lethargy and corruption, but does not want to be as negative as V.S. Naipaul, who does not see any possibility of improvement and he absolutely refuses "to dismiss his people". For the outsider it is often hard to understand that you may utter sharp criticism on certain aspects of the society in which you live and at the same time be furiously in love with your people.

## Lack of tradition and cadre

As soon as he publishes something

Derek Walcott, born in St. Lucia on January 23rd. 1930. Lost his father when he was only one year old. His mother was head of a Methodist school and did everything possible to give Derek and his twin brother a good education. Derek studied at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica; after that he received a fellowship from The Rockefeller Foundation to study theatre sciences in the United States.

Since 1961 he is director of the Trinidad Theatre Workshop. Presently he is living in Trinidad and holds a staff position as lecturer of poetry at Harvard University in Boston.

At a very early age Derek Walcott started to write and publish for his own account: *25 Poems* (1949); *Epitaph for the Young* (1949); *Poems* (1952).

In *A Green Night* (1962) was published in England just like *The Castaway* (1965) and *The Gulf* (1969) Besides that *Dream on Monkey Mountain* and other plays (1970) were published in the U.S.A., as well as the long autobiographical poem *Another Life* (1972). Finally I want to mention the more recent poem *The Starapple Kingdom*. And this winter *The Fortunate Traveller* will see the light.

Both poetry and theatre continue to hold Walcott's complete attention.

the European author is immediately placed in a broader context; not so the Caribbean author, who remains a lot more isolated. The work of someone like Wilson Harris must therefore be viewed in this light. He makes an attempt at creating tradition by using different historical periods simultaneously and placing time in a mythical framework, as he did in his *Palace of the Peacock*. In this way Walcott finds a relationship among various Caribbean writers without there being a question of mutual influencing. Critics often stress the British influence that supposedly would have had its effect on Walcott. He does acknowledge this, for as a young author in the colonies he felt sharply that he was heir to a foreign tradition. The forefathers, European and African, are absorbed, but the question is what to do with this tradition, how not to let it become a burden, ▶



but on the contrary to allow it to function in a fertile way for your own development.

The lacking cadre is mentioned when we touch upon the Carifesta on Barbados, where Walcott was very much absent. He explains why he stated that it was a waste of time and effort to perpetrate the myth that there is a West Indian culture. There are certainly common historical characteristics, but those are integrated functionally in today's visible structures and organisations. So those who attend the Carifesta are in fact celebrating the absence of every condition for a genuine culture and that is the one that fulfills a role in daily life: culture is practised! He predicts the disappointment of the artist who back again on his own island and in his isolation, detached from any tradition or culture, has to go back to work again, but who in reality is not able to do so, because the necessary facilities are lacking. Maybe Cuba is an exception to this rule? Why isn't there a Caribbean

translation-centre to get to know and appreciate each other's work? Why isn't there a follow-up to such a conference. Why aren't more scholarships made available to talent wishing to fully develop in an artistic sense? These kinds of lacunae fill Walcott with pessimism with regard to his people.

#### Challenge

But just a few minutes later we are talking about the statement he once made: "one race's quarrel with another God" and he explains his objections to the way in which he was always taught to see God as white.

The metropolitan has consciously suppressed the distinctive Caribbean cultural developments and has never made any effort to really understand and appreciate the cultural expressions in the colonies.

In this way Walcott again and again demonstrates that he is a critic who is moderate, because he shows understanding for both

sides. Superficially it might seem that he is indeed nihilistic, as he cries down both sides. But the actual function of his criticism is positive. What do you do with this knowledge of the deficiencies you are mentioning?

In the lectures and workshop he held in Aruba Walcott stressed a number of aspects that he wants to turn into a positive direction, to not consider the historical heritage, the cultural and language diversity, the racial segmentation as an obstacle, but on the contrary to appreciate them in a positive way. In the Caribbean nearly all the great world cultures encounter each other. We have the opportunity to expand our experiences through contacts with all these diversities in culture, language and history. The challenge for today's Caribbean man is to give to this a new unity and structure of its own and thus, in the international context, participate in the total culture, proceeding from his own specific situation. ■



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# Bishop relinquishes 98 year old paper



## Buyers claim democracy motive

The sale of the prestigious Roman Catholic daily 'The Amigoe' several weeks ago caused surprisingly little uproar. Progressive groups, which had threatened with actions in case the paper would be sold to parties representing capital and right wing ideology, kept their peace. Only a few roman catholics expressed their concern about the fact that the new owners cannot be depicted as staunch adherents to the Mother Church. But aside from those murmurs the transition went as smoothly as anyone involved could have wished. An encouraging development for both the former owner the Bishop and the new proprietors, whose stated motive in taking over the virtually bankrupt paper is to safeguard the democratic process in the Neth. Antilles.

### Financial Problems

Founded in 1883 by Dominican fathers the paper, which in 1941 became a daily, has a longstanding reputation of editorial integrity. Having no official links to any political party and having gained a more or less independent position from the Church, the Amigoe today has quite a voice of authority in the country. Accumulating debts, incurred during the past few years, however, brought the paper to the verge of bankruptcy. The skyrocketing prices of print during the seventies, extremely conservative price-control measures by the Government with regard to subscriptions were some of the external causes of the threatening debacle. Internally the paper suffered from weak

management at board level. A joint distribution system with three other dailies proved, again because of bad management, an extremely costly affair. The Bishop kept supplying funds and guarantees to the ever more nervous bankers. A careful estimation has it that he lost over one million guilders during the last five years. A considerable amount for a paper with a circulation of approximately 10.000. Rising criticism caused by a series of left-oriented articles in the weekly supplement may well have been the last push to make him decide to sell.

### Difficult step

Not an easy decision. The paper after all had neither been founded nor kept going for almost one hundred years for commercial reasons. Giving it up might be interpreted as yet another step backwards by the Church. At least the democratic and objective character of the paper had to be safeguarded. Moreover the catholic community had to be given the assurance that the paper's allegiance to the Church would not be discontinued. Already prior to the sale many of the faithful felt that the Amigoe was no longer truly representative of the catholic view.

Also the danger that the paper would fall into the hands of parties having a large stake in other media had to be avoided. The fragile structure of democracy in the country could easily be undermined in a serious way by a wrong move.

### Threats

Several groups presented themselves as prospective buyers to the Bishop. One of them at least fell into the category indicated above. The party most acceptable at first sight, being composed of loyal and well known catholics, caused uneasiness amongst progressives and moderates alike because of its openly confessed right-wing ideas. This prompted a group of self-styled socialists to invade the Bishop's living quarters one night, announcing serious trouble in case he would decide to sell to this particular group. Also the editorial staff expressed grave objections and threatened to counteract by means of a strike.

### New Owners

In the end the paper went to a group, which presented itself at the last moment having heard of the problems, which had arisen. Although not consisting exclusively of catholics — in fact the actual initiators of the group were not catholic at all — carried the Bishop's favour, because of its clear-cut vision about the required standard and democratic mission of the Amigoe and last but not least because of its managerial skills. As an act of good faith with regard to the catholic character of the Amigoe the group offered the Bishop a seat on the Board of Trustees even after the transfer of the shares, which must take place within two years. From the 15th of October last the Bishop has relinquished his shareholders's voting right to the group, which is presently analysing the situation of the paper and contemplating measures to put it back on its feet. Although doing so may prove an extremely difficult task — the paper's debts run well over half a million guilders — the group's strong conviction that the country needs an objective paper in which both the right and left can express their opinions and which should stand guard over the basic principles of democracy and values of christian civilisation, justifies the expectation that the Amigoe will indeed survive. ■



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## BEHAVIOR cont'd

food in stock, the “pikadónan di punta” (the roving merrymakers and disciples of Bacchus) have a field day.

Many families on Christmas Day display all their culinary art, having prepared ahead of time the most exquisite native delicacies to make sure they can proudly cater to their guests.

Those who can afford it have “keshi yená” (stuffed Edam cheese) and “kalakuna yená” (stuffed turkey) on their menu. In some families dancing parties are organized on Christmas day in the evening hours.

The next day “Dos día di Pasku” (2nd Christmas Day or Boxing Day) the celebrations are continued.

After the 26th, the festive mood is continued until “Bispu di Anja Nobo” (New Year’s Eve).

### End of year celebrations

Meanwhile the “tambú” season has started. The “tambú” is

played, sung and danced all over the island. There was a time that it was prohibited. Nowadays, however, it has recovered its rightful place in our folklore. In the satirical songs sung at the “tambú”, persons, situations and happenings (chronique scandaleuse) are criticized, praised or ridiculed.

However, this is not the main purpose of the “tambú”. It is rather the opportunity for participants to transport themselves into a frenzy of dancing, singing, handclapping, foot stamping and wildly girating their hips.

For New Year’s celebrations the menu is extended with “carni sá” (corned beef or beef in brine), “pekelé” marinated herring and red onions), and “salmou di bari” (brined salmon) eaten with “konkomber pika” (hot peppered cucumbers). All this highly seasoned food combined with the hot “soppi di mondongo” (hot peppered tripe chowder) form a substantial base to cope with the

numerous toasts to the New Year.

In the early evening another ritual takes place in many homes. Around ten o’clock “fuku i mal hairu” (jinx and potential evils) of the past year that might be residing in the house are chased away by “sensiamentu” (the burning of incense). The “sensia” consists of 7 kinds of herbs, with skins of onions and garlic, sometimes, added. The material is ignited on a tin tray with charcoal and taken through every room of the house. The members of the family stand around the smoking incense. Some even jump over the burning incense to assure themselves of getting rid of the bad luck. Those families who possess a gold coin will pass this from hand to hand in order to invoke good luck in the attainment of wealth. Another New Year’s Eve activity is the sweeping of the house all the way through to the front door. Once outside, the house-wife re-enters her house walking backwards to ▶



fool any evil spirit that might be planning to follow her back into the house.

Some people still practice the custom of taking a thorough cleansing bath with different herbs, in order to rid themselves of bad luck and afterwards they put on a new set of clothes as yet untouched by the human body so as to start the year in an immaculate condition. The louder the colours of the dress the better and the merrier. It seems that yellow is the lucky colour "par excellence". Most members of the family remain together until "Tiru tira" (literally: the gun is fired, the stroke of 12). Others take a walk to be totally alone when the New Year starts. Some families drive around in their cars so that the new year will find them together but unencumbered.

Some go to the sea-shore and take a dip in the sea. After getting out they put on new clothes, leaving the old ones containing the "fuku" (jinx) behind. A very respectful custom called back all grown children from parties so as to be in the family circle at the entrance of the New Year in order to receive the parents' blessing. After the toast with the members of the family, the young people could leave again to continue their merry-making.

### Blessing

Others again used to walk in large numbers to the square, plaza, in front of the Holy Family Church at San Mateo to receive the blessing of the Bishop, that is from 1969 to 1975.

From 1860 until 1969 this used to take place on "Awasá" (Plaza Brion) in front of the Bishop's mansion. The ceremony is transmitted by the local radio stations. In 1976 the traditional blessing ceremony, (which started in 1740) upon the request of Gezaghebber Ornelio Martina to the Bishop Monsignor Willem M. Ellis took place again on Plaza Brion. There are many people who eagerly seek out a person who has been successful in life and business to be the first one to greet them on New

Year, hoping that some of their good luck will rub off on them. Even before New Year's Eve especially children start lighting fireworks.

Some businessmen at the closing of their shops, particularly the Chinese, fire off barrages of fireworks to chase away the evil spirits, a performance that can stir the jealousy of any pyrotechnician.

As midnight approaches the firing off of fireworks increases in volume and intensity. Adults also indulge. This custom dates back to 1722. At midnight all hell breaks loose. The noise of fireworks is ear-splitting. All ships in port blow their whistles for 5 to 10 minutes and in times past traditionally a single "tiru" (cannonshot) was fired. On January 1st 1807 the cannonshot was not fired, because the island was conquered before midnight by the British under the command of Sir Charles Brisbane.

It was afterwards restored again and lasted for many years. Some years ago it was discontinued, but in 1976 Gezaghebber Ornelio Martina got the Commander of the Armed Forces willing to restore this old tradition again and

from then on a shot is fired on the dot of 12 o'clock from the artillery platform at Marietje, ushering in the New Year.

On the stroke of 12 o'clock everybody in their homes, outside in the cars, in the streets, hugs, embraces and wishes each other the very best for the New Year. Dancing parties go on until the wee hours. In more sedate circles, family, relatives, neighbours and acquaintances celebrate New Year in an intimate group.

In the outskirts the "tambú" goes on wildly and in the more separated places outside the city it goes on all through the night and early morning.

The country-side reverberates the hard driving, unevenly syncopated sounds of the "tambu". After the preparatory drinks of the day, hardly anybody can resist its tantalizing rhythm and without realizing it, feet leave the ground: they are dancing . . .

The month of December brings back to me all these happenings, customs and traditions.

Remembrances that bring me renewed happiness and strength, hope and inspiration to tackle the New Year. ■

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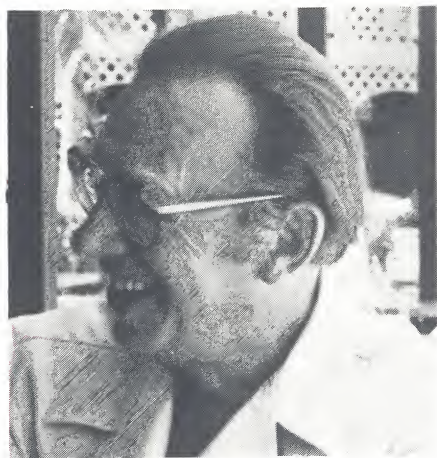
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# Champagne for Christmas

by Han Folkertsma



Why is it that any festive occasion — be it a promotion, a jubilee or end of the year celebration — as a matter of course calls for champagne? Is it the festive bubbling liquid itself, the ritual of discorking, the high flute glass in which the effervescent drink is sparklingly presented to the drinker or is it tradition?

No doubt it is a combination of all these factors that has made champagne the party drink par excellence. A thrifty person will probably also mention the high price, which gives it a certain exclusiveness. And he will not be wrong, for a fine French champagne is absolutely not cheap and can certainly not be considered a table wine, unless that table is surrounded by persons with an income that is clearly above average.

## Must champagne be so expensive?

Yes and no. Yes, because a “real one”, which comes from the relatively small district allowed to produce this sparkling wine, is made in a very cumbersome way and often “by hand”; no, because also a high champagne is originally nothing but an ordinary wine. A wine that in addition comes from one of the most Northern wine-regions and therefore cannot boast an abundant sun-bath.

## Origins

He who proceeds from the assumption that no real wine cultivation is possible above the fiftieth degree latitude, will find Reims, the champagne capital situated in 49° 25' North latitude, very close to the limits of the possible. And yet champagne is the queen of wines and the wine for queens. And for the festive celebration of the important days in our lives.

Dom Perignon, the cellar master of

Hautervilles Abbey (three miles to the north of Epernay), for centuries has been connected with the manner of making champagne still being used today. When this capable monastery Lord died in 1715 at the age of seventy-seven, he left behind a record of renewals in the production of wine. But one thing, he was not the “discoverer” of champagne as is often suggested. Mother nature can pride herself on that.

## Endless care”

The never-ending care given to real champagne in the bottles in the enormous underground cellars vaulting the region makes the stuff so expensive. For when the simple white wine from selected grapes from the region itself (mainly pinot Noir and Pinot Meunier) comes to rest after its first wild fermentation, in the spring after the harvest a second fermentation begins and the carbonic acid gasses then released are kept within the wine, causing the effervescent character. At that time the wine has already been mixed according to recipes that differ from house to house in order to get a specific taste. To help the second fermentation along just a little sweet, the “liqueur de tirage”, is added, mostly consisting of cane sugar and old wine. This is done very minutely, because the stage has now been reached, where a “brut”, a “sec” or a “demi” originates.

Subsequently the hundred thousands of bottles are placed upside down in “pupitres” and given an eighth turn by hand every day by the “rémueurs”. This continues patiently for three to five months, until all sediments from the wine have sunk to the neck and on the (provisional) cork. Then all the bottles are passed through an “obdercooled” brine-bath, as a result

of which the bung of sediments is frozen. The cork must then be removed very quickly to allow the bung to fly out (dégorgement) and to fill it up once more an extract of old wines and sugar is again added, dependent upon what they want to arrive at: brut-sec or demi-sec. Then the champagne is ready for the celebration that each glass is again capable of offering.

## Christmas Dinner

But just take a look through a glass of real champagne: the very fine bubbles keep going on and on, distributed over the entire glass (and in heaven's name always pour the drink in a proper glass and never in a wide coupe, which immediately commits an assault on the beautiful stuff), still half an hour after having been poured. If you stick a toothpick into it (stealthily, because this is slightly barbarian) new bubbles will form around the little stick. A simple sekt or most adorable Spumante will have long since given up the struggle and very quickly turns into a lightly effervescent white wine, the taste also being less refined.

The nice thing about champagne is that in addition it feels at home with almost every dish; fish goes just as well with it as does steak, venison and also a desert.

Maybe an idea for the coming holidays: give a champagne dinner. This is in any case better than the idea of certain snobs who prefer champagne at breakfast to a cup of coffee or declare that for years they have been brushing their teeth with the noble beverage. ■





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### SPECIAL FEATURE cont'd

has been possible to escape the deadening hand of government.

#### Comparison

Mr. Casseres next reviewed some of the examples mentioned. "First, agriculture. At the time of the Declaration of Independence of the United States of America in 1776, it took nearly 19 out of every twenty workers to grow and produce enough to feed the country's inhabitants and to provide a small surplus for export. Today, it takes fewer than one in twenty workers to feed 220 million Americans and to provide a surplus that makes the U.S. the largest single food exporter in the world. In the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, India and China – all centrally planned economies – one-quarter to one-half of all workers are engaged in agriculture, while in addition these countries must import massive quantities of agricultural products to avoid starvation."

"Next industries. Singapore became independent from Britain in the 1950's. Singapore is a small island off the coast of Malaysia, not too much larger than Curaçao.

It has no natural resources other than its people, a hardworking people, willing and not slow to learn new tasks

and with a sense of common purpose, clear direction and dynamic leadership. For a few years, Singapore sought the support of its big brother, Malaysia, in the formation of the Federation of Malaysia. In 1965 it was separated from the federation and it had to fight for the survival of its over two million people. Today, its population enjoys a standard of living that is second only to Japan's. How did they do it?

In the words of Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, Prime Minister of Singapore since 1959: "The answer turned out to be free enterprise, tempered with the socialist philosophy of equal opportunities for education, jobs, health and housing".

Singapore's success lay in the fact that it opened up its borders to foreign investors and to foreign know-how with the specific objective of training its own people to later take over the management of the industries.

In 1960, manufacturing formed 11% of the G.N.P.; in 1977, the percentage of G.N.P. attributable to manufacturing had increased to 15%. In addition, family planning program reduced the net population increase and per capita G.N.P. increased from US\$ 457 in 1960 to US\$ 2857 in 1977."

Finally, what about those failures of the centrally planned economies?

Imitation is the highest form of flattery, the saying goes. In Hungary there continues to be today a central plan, but it became a guide, not a legal document. Instead of giving direct orders, Hungarian central planners monitor and manipulate taxes, credit, interest rates, prices and incentives – all capitalist tools of the free marketeer. A large part of the Hungarian corporation's profit goes into a profit sharing fund, while successful managers are rewarded with higher pay. In Cuba, salary reforms instituted in 1979-1980 increased worker productivity, while its free farmers' market, where farmers can do business after meeting their quotas at the state market, has increased the supply of fresh produce. Workers in China are paid on a piece-good basis and farmers sell the products of their allotted private plots on truly free markets where supply and demand establish the price.

The countries that insisted on sticking to centrally planned economies without introducing incentives of one form or another are experiencing severe economic and supply difficulties. ▶



## SPECIAL FEATURE

The record is clear according to mr. Gomes Casseres. On the long term, it is only the market oriented economy that has been able to pass through the strains of the past decade in relatively good health, and it is the socialist, centrally planned economy that is stalled and that today is adopting some of the characteristics of the market economy to get its economy moving again. It is also the centrally planned society in which the political, cultural, social, and economic freedoms of people are being stepped on or are being taken away completely; it is the market economy of the West in which freedom of association, freedom of the press, freedom of cultural expression and personal development flourish.

Does this mean that we have to go back to a laissez-faire society in order to have genuine development in the developing nations of this world?

In his encyclical "Laborem Exercens", On Working, issued a month ago, Pope John Paul II condemned laissez-faire capitalism because capitalism in its classical form simply is not sensitive enough to human needs; but Pope Paul also condemns socialism because it produces "excessive bureaucratic centralization" which exploits the worker as if he were "just a cog in a huge machine".

I would conclude from the Pope's words that we need to search for a form of capitalism that is sensitive to human needs, to ecological concerns, and to the value of each being in the production process. ■

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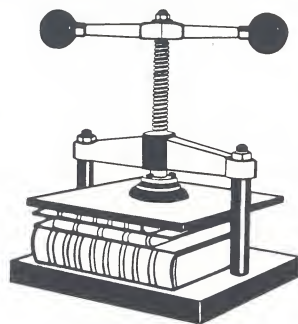
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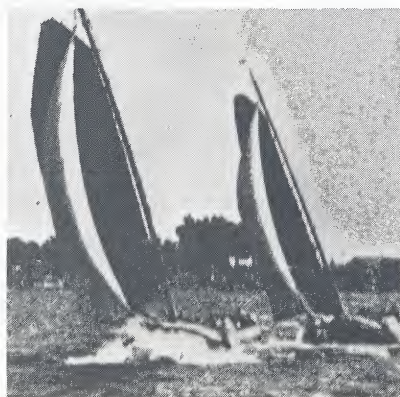
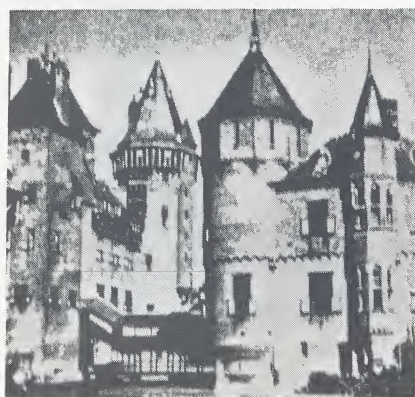
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